



# NATURE, MARKETS, TOURISM

Exploring Tourism's claims to Conservation in India



Equations

Nature, Markets, Tourism: Exploring Tourism's claims to Conservation in India  
June 2009

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Printing: Focus Communications, Bengaluru

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NATURE, MARKETS, TOURISM:  
EXPLORING TOURISM'S CLAIMS TO CONSERVATION  
IN INDIA

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EQUITABLE TOURISM OPTIONS

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## NATURE, MARKETS, TOURISM:

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### EXPLORING TOURISM'S CLAIMS TO CONSERVATION IN INDIA

**H**aving emerged as an important niche in the tourism sector, ecotourism has received considerable attention in tourism and conservation policies at the international, regional, national and state levels. Ecotourism has caught the fancy of policy makers and the tourism industry as a form of tourism that presents itself as benign. Armed with the twin objectives of aiding environmental conservation and benefiting local communities in its definition, ecotourism has not only made inroads in newer areas hitherto untouched by tourism, but has also appropriated other forms like wildlife tourism, adventure tourism and to a certain extent rural tourism. However, much remains to be desired in ecotourism actualising its objectives. This collection of research papers by EQUATIONS are an effort to explore the extent to which a market based mechanism like ecotourism can actually contribute to conservation and community rights and benefits. To what extent has its growth trajectory taken into account the realities and complexities that local communities deal with in terms of livelihood, access to resources and traditional rights.

The areas selected for the research were chosen based on the ecosystems they represent (mostly natural resource rich and biodiverse areas), the push for ecotourism in these areas and faced by the indigenous and local communities in these states. We observed the prolific and rather loose use of term ecotourism, a sub-component of nature based tourism, in all sorts of contexts. We prefer to use the term tourism, as the kind of tourism that one can qualify as ecotourism, is rarely seen in actual practise.

Uttarakhand in North India is mostly mountainous, with the Himalayas and trans-Himalayan ranges between the plains and mountains. The two Protected Areas that were selected for the research were Nanda Devi National Park in the Himalayas and the Corbett National Park in the plains. Uttarakhand has also been promoted as an adventure (cum eco) tourism destination with trekking, mountaineering, skiing, white water rafting, para-sailing and para-gliding. The Corbett National Park, is a long standing wildlife (cum eco) tourism destination. Uttarakhand is also a new state that was formed in the year 2000. An impetus for the carving out of this state as separate was to ensure more attention to the specific context and issues that it's indigenous and hill communities faced. However, the indigenous Bhotia community has been denied access to the traditional use of their forests in Nanda Devi National Park and the Van Gujjars of Corbett National Park are being pressurised to relocate.

Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh in Central India represent forest ecosystems. The two states also have designated Schedule V Areas, which are areas dominated by indigenous tribal groups. The Constitution of India accords special status and greater autonomy to these areas; there is a prohibition on transferring land ownership to non-tribals in these areas. The Protected Areas of Madhya Pradesh are also quite popular wildlife tourism destinations and boast of a high tiger population. Kanha and Bandhavgarh National Parks are among the most visited Protected Areas in the country. The indigenous Baiga and Gond communities, who lived in these areas when they were notified as National

Parks, are now being displaced out of the parks in order that they are "conserved" as pristine wildlife areas. However tourism establishments flourish on the boundaries and tourists are welcomed into the park. Chhattisgarh, which was carved as a separate state out of Madhya Pradesh, to ensure greater autonomy to the indigenous and local communities, banks heavily on ecotourism and has opted for the privatisation route to develop tourism in the State. The Protected Areas of Chhattisgarh marked as prime ecotourism destinations are also home to many indigenous tribes such as the Baigas and Gonds. They are also being pressured to relocate out of the forests. Our research focussed on the Protected Areas of Kanha and Bandhavgarh National Parks in Madhya Pradesh and Barnawapara and Achanakmar Wildlife Sanctuaries in Chhattisgarh.

Andaman & Nicobar Islands are unique as they represent tropical forests and coral reef ecosystems. The islands are also the home to five primitive and endangered indigenous groups – Jarawas, Onges, Great Andamanese and Sentinelese in Andamans and the Shompens in Nicobars. The dominant Nicobari tribe inhabits the Nicobar Islands. Tourism is restricted to the Andamans only and is being pushed as a major economic activity. One of the thrust areas is ecotourism and here it is both the forests and sea that are sites of ecotourism activities like trekking, canopy walks and beach tourism, snorkelling.

We have relied mostly on field study based primary data collection such as interviews and discussions. Interviews were undertaken with key government departments especially with officials of the state tourism and forest departments. Site visits were made to the selected areas and group discussions were held with indigenous and local communities, office bearers of local self government institutions. Discussions and interviews were also held with resort and lodge owners on the sites.

This compilation of four papers attempts to provide a context to understand ecotourism and its impacts in relation to critical issues on the ground and from the perspective of different stakeholders. First, examining ecotourism as a market based conservation measure has been explained and discussed. The second paper highlights important tourism issues in the four states. It addresses issues of tourism growth around Protected Areas and the role of institutions of local self government. The paper also looks at how tourism growth does not consider issues critical to indigenous and local communities such as their right to self governance, access & control of natural resources especially land. The third paper links tourism development issues and their impacts on women. The fourth paper is a case study of tourism establishments around the Bandhavgarh and Kanha National Parks and their approaches to environmental issues. Finally, we have included a broad framework of analysis that may be useful to anyone who wishes to investigate ecotourism development issues.

We would like to acknowledge SwedBio and Global Forest Coalition for providing the financial support and the valuable opportunity to undertake this research. We thank our network partners and contacts in the four states who made the field visits and interactions with the indigenous and local communities possible:

In Uttarakhand - Sunil Kainthola, Dhan Singh Rana, Staff of Mountain Shepherds Initiative, Abdul Rahman, Rajiv Lochan Shah, Mahesh Joshi, Prabhat Kumar Dhyani, Ganesh Rawat, Rajiv Bhartari

In Madhya Pradesh – Anita Pawar, Bhagwat Patel, Mahipal Baiga and Satyendra Tiwari

In Chhattisgarh – Gautam Bandhopadhyay, Alok, Jiyalal, Manendra and other Staff of Chhattisgarh Action & Research Team & Nadi Ghat Morcha and Lalit Surjan

In Andaman Islands – Samir Acharya, Bimal Roy

We are especially indebted to the indigenous and local communities of Lata & Tolma villages (Uttarakhand), Gurwahi, Garhpuri, Pathaur & Tala Villages in Bandhavgarh (Madhya Pradesh), Loridkhar village in Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary & Bahaur, Bokrakachar & Chhapharwa villages

in Achanakmar Wildlife Sanctuary (Chhattisgarh), and the local communities of South Andaman, Havelock, Neil, Baratang, Wandoor, Rangat, Long Island, Mayabunder and Diglipur for providing valuable perspectives to the research.

We would also like to thank the participants of the following consultations for their valuable inputs:

- Andaman Islands – consultation held on 2 January 2009 at Port Blair
- Chhattisgarh – consultation held on 10-12 January 2009 at Raipur for Central India
- Uttarakhand – consultation held on 7 February 2009 at Rishikesh and 8 February 2009 at Ramnagar

Peeyush Sekhsaria's contribution to the study on eco-friendly practices of resorts in Kanha and Bandhavgarh is gratefully acknowledged.

EQUATIONS Team,  
June 2009

# ECOTOURISM AS A MARKETBASED CONSERVATION SCHEME

EXISTING FINANCIAL INCENTIVES FOR MARKET-BASED CONSERVATION  
SCHEMES & IMPACTS ON COMMUNITY BASED CONSERVATION INITIATIVES



## 1. Ecotourism as a market based conservation scheme (definition / description)

‘Market based conservation schemes’ are mechanisms that seek to mobilise and channel private sector contributions for the sake of environmental conservation and the use of markets to resolve various environmental problems<sup>1</sup>. It is being actively propagated as an innovative approach “[t]o attract private contributions, introduce sustainable resource management practices compatible with the Rio Conventions’ objectives and principles, and contribute to the development of economic opportunities in poor, rural areas of the world<sup>2</sup>”. These schemes are being actively promoted by a large variety of governmental and non-governmental actors, as a possible new and innovative way to finance the conservation of forests and other ecosystems<sup>3</sup>. In India, ecotourism is one such scheme being promoted because it is lucrative to speak the conservation language.

Parties to the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) have also embraced other market-based approaches to biodiversity conservation. A strong push for such approaches came from the debate about Biological Diversity and Tourism, which was first initiated in 1999 and lead to an extensive discussion about the negative and positive impacts of tourism on biodiversity at the fifth Conference of the Parties of the Biodiversity Convention in 2000. Despite a number of cautionary statements about the many things that can go wrong when tourism is being promoted in biodiversity-rich areas, Decision V/25 of the

Conference of the Parties states that “tourism does present a significant potential for realizing benefits in terms of the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of its components.” In the same decision the Conference of the Parties also notes that “Historical observation indicates that self-regulation of the tourism industry for sustainable use of biological resources has only rarely been successful.”

Despite this acknowledgement of the inherent limitations of voluntary approaches, the Parties to the CBD subsequently embarked on a process to elaborate voluntary CBD guidelines for Biodiversity and Tourism Development, which were adopted by the 7th Conference of the Parties to the CBD. The need to involve Indigenous Peoples and local communities in tourism development is mentioned in these guidelines, but only as a voluntary measure. Meanwhile, at the national level, many governments have been embracing the ‘potential’ of tourism by actively promoting “ecotourism” development, that is, the development of tourism in biodiversity-rich areas. Many of these national tourism promotion policies are defended with reference to the positive contribution such policies could make to biodiversity conservation. However, with the guidelines being of a voluntary nature, many so-called “ecotourism” developments are far from sustainable. Moreover, community<sup>4</sup>-driven tourism initiatives are still playing a marginal role compared to the massive tourism schemes – often labelled as ecotourism – currently being developed by large tour operators. As recognized by the CBD, it is extremely hard for communities to compete in a market that is “fiercely competitive” and “controlled by financial interests located away from tourist destinations” (decision V/25, Conference of the Parties). Also, negative impacts on local communities can be significant as “operators are very likely to “export” their adverse environmental impacts, such as refuse, waste water and sewage, to parts of the surrounding area unlikely to be visited by tourists” (decision V/25 of the Conference of the Parties).

## 2. Why is Ecotourism a lucrative option?

Ecotourism is undoubtedly big business across the world. When the United Nations Environment Programme with blessings of the World Tourism Organisation launched the International Year of Ecotourism in 2002, it received vociferous sponsorship and support from industry giants and travel associations. The reason was simple – ‘ecotourism’ was the magic mantra that enabled the tourism industry to pacify critics by using the language of conservation and managing the adverse environmental footprints of tourism while not compromising on profits. This green-washing was starkly evident to communities and groups in developing countries – which were the target for ecotourism – who wrote to UNEP and IYE organisers registering their protest and concerns. But despite these efforts, ecotourism continues to be a popular concept for governments and industry to adopt. There are those who think that brand ‘ecotourism’ has run its length and is on its way out, especially in the west and tourist-source countries. But sadly, this is not the case in countries like India where ecotourism still reigns supreme as a feasible concept and gets active government support and industry investment. Ecotourism continues to be a popular option because of its claim to support conservation attempts through the market-based mechanism.

Moreover, very little regulation exists for ecotourism development in India with amendments to existing environmental laws and policies that facilitate rather than regulate. The National Environment Policy, 2006 recommends ecotourism in all wilderness and ecologically sensitive areas; the new Environmental Impact Assessment Notification has omitted tourism from the purview of environment impact assessment and clearance; these are a few examples to show the changing face of regulatory frameworks. With newer policies like the concepts like special tourism zones (STZ), the tourism industry has been given holiday from accountability and ecotourism is set to capitalize on this.

Estimates place the value of the ecotourism market in developing countries close to USD 400 billion

annually<sup>5</sup>. India has a substantial share of this market on account of its rich biological and cultural diversity and heritage and entrepreneurship skills in the tourism industry that have capitalised on ecotourism. The main incentives for development of ecotourism have been through private capital, UN agencies and more recently, involvement of international financial institutions like the World Bank and Asian Development Bank.

### 3. Ecotourism in India - policy and regulatory implications

India has a history of colonial rulers usurping control of natural resources from indigenous and local communities that has led to the breaking down of traditional management and knowledge systems of conservation. The process continued post-independence, which led to the adoption of an exclusionary model of conservation complemented with sometimes stringent laws. This has resulted in intensification of conflicts between communities and the authorities. Where the authorities have been unsuccessful in conserving forests effectively, under pressure from commercial and political forces, there are numerous community-initiated and community-based conservation process across the country.

On a parallel level, ecotourism is being vigorously propagated in many of these protected areas and community conserved areas. The push for this kind of propagation is emerging from national and state level ecotourism / tourism policies, projects of international financial institutions and inter-governmental agencies.

Drawing from international guidelines<sup>6</sup> prepared by tourism industry associations and organisations, the Ecotourism<sup>7</sup> Policy & Guidelines, 1998 issued by the Ministry of Tourism – Govt. of India, represents interests of global industry players. The policy approach is environmental protection for sake of profits. The policy outlines all ecosystems of India as ecotourism resources and states that these have been well protected and preserved.

#### Example of community conserved area in India

Regeneration and protection of 600-700 hectares of forest by Jardhargaoon village in Uttarakhand state in India. Villagers have also re-discovered hundreds of varieties of indigenous crops and are successfully growing them organically, and practicing a traditional system of grassland and water management. In the recent year they have also struggled to save not only the forests in their own village but in the surrounding areas which are being destroyed by mining or hydro-electric projects [Suryanarayanan, J. and Malhotra, P. (1999)].

#### Source:

Pathak, N., Islam, A., Ekaratne, S.U.K., and Hussain, A. "Lessons Learnt in the Establishment and Management of Protected Areas by Indigenous and Local Communities in South Asia", IUCN; data retrieved from <http://www.iucn.org/themes/ceesp/Publications/TILCEPA/CCA-NPathak.pdf> November 2006

Where the policy enlists its principles and elaborates operational aspects for key players in the ecotourism business, the role of communities is considerably reduced to protecting environmental resources and providing services to tourism in the role of 'hosts'. An environment protected by communities is a resource for ecotourism when tourists experience the natural beauty. Indigenous and local communities become important "stakeholders" thereby becoming subservient to a process where environmental protection is vested from their control and is being pursued for the sake of supporting

economic enterprise. What the policy fails to realise is the cross linkages between ecotourism and the social, cultural, economic and institutional processes of indigenous and local communities. Their lives are very closely linked to the environment they live in and their customs and traditions bear strong linkages to it.

The Tourism Policy for the Andaman and Nicobar Islands is a rather simplistic document serving very little of its purpose of providing guideline and principles for implementation<sup>8</sup>.

Chhattisgarh does not have an ecotourism policy. Information on ecotourism sites is provided on the official website<sup>9</sup> which states that one of the major objectives of the policy is to promote economically, culturally and ecologically sustainable tourism in the State; with ecotourism in the 3 national parks and 11 wildlife sanctuaries.

The salient features of Madhya Pradesh's Ecotourism Policy, 2007<sup>10</sup> include development of infrastructure, promotion of lesser known areas, diversification of tourism activities, building awareness and securing local community and private sector participation. Ecotourism activities will include nature camps, eco-friendly accommodation, trekking and nature walks, wildlife viewing and river cruise, adventure sports, angling, herbal ecotourism, urban ecotourism through eco-parks, visitor interpretation centres, and conservation education.

Uttarakhand does not have a separate ecotourism policy but the development of ecotourism has been included in the tourism policy of the state<sup>11</sup>, which was formulated in April 2001. The Policy's vision is to elevate Uttarakhand into a major tourist destination both nationally and internationally and make Uttarakhand "synonymous to tourism". It wishes to develop this sector in an "eco-friendly manner, with the active participation of the private sector and the local host communities." And finally, it wishes to develop tourism as a major income earner for the state and as a source of employment to the extent of being "a pivot of the economic and social development in the State."

The state policies focus on ecotourism through private sector investment. The policies lay a thrust on opening naturally important and ecologically sensitive areas for ecotourism. That the lives and livelihoods of communities dependent on these natural resources will be impacted, and severely so if ecotourism is unregulated, is hardly acknowledged in the state level policies.

It is the rich natural heritage spread along the forests, mountains, coasts and rivers, all of which are the living spaces of communities, which constitute the 'tourism product'. Even Protected Areas, which have by definition prohibit commercial activities, are now being seen as potential tourism areas<sup>12</sup>. It is the location of tourism, a resource-intensive activity, in these areas that gives rise to a conflict of interests between the needs of local communities and conservation with the needs of a consumer oriented industry which understands nature as an economic commodity.

The Ministry of Environment & Forests - Government of India took steps for setting up protected areas: national parks and wildlife sanctuaries, and later community reserves and conservation reserves under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 and its subsequent amendments. Large populations of indigenous and local communities were displaced when these protected areas were notified<sup>13</sup>. And now, the forest departments of many Indian states, including the study states, planned to develop ecotourism in many of these protected areas. In many cases, the operations involve the services of indigenous / local communities in the form of guides and workers in lodges etc. While there are inherent problems in the manner in which this form of ecotourism is done, i.e. largely driven by forest departments with little participation of communities in decision making and benefits largely going to state exchequers, ecotourism is nevertheless being promoted as a conservation scheme.

Moreover, community-owned tourism initiatives are still playing a marginal role compared to the other tourism schemes, which are often labelled as ecotourism and developed by large, often global, tour operators. They consider ecotourism as a source of sustainable livelihood supplement and not to compete for markets. It is extremely hard for communities to compete with a market that is fiercely competitive and which controlled by financial interests in tourist destinations. Also, negative impacts on local communities can be significant as operators are very likely to export their adverse environmental impacts, such as refuse, waste water and sewage, to parts of the surrounding area unlikely to be visited by tourists. Most often, governments have overlooked these initiatives and have extended little support. They have also promoted different versions of tourism as ecotourism with no inkling of conservation. Another worrying factor is that governments have used undemocratic means to assert their roles through policies.

### Context for Forest Management in Uttarakhand

As the largest custodian of state property, the Forest Department has been unable to maintain the forests in good condition or meet people's forest-based livelihood needs. Its responsibility for enforcing the Forest Conservation and Wild Life Protection Acts has reinforced its image as an anti-people agency. Thus, in 1988-89, some of the Chipko activists started yet another, relatively less known Ped Kato Andolan (cut trees movement). They argued that the Forest Conservation Act 'was being used to hold up basic development schemes for the hill villages while the builders' mafia continues to flout it brazenly under the guise of promoting tourism' (Rawat, 1998). More recently, resource displacement and loss of livelihoods caused by expansion of the protected area network produced the Cheeno Jhapto Andolan (snatch and grab movement) reflecting the intense feelings of alienation and disempowerment. Women who earned international fame for stopping contractors from felling their forests during Chipko have come to hate the word environment. As one of these women from Reni village complained: '*They have put this entire (surrounding forest) area under the Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve. I can't even pick herbs to treat a stomach ache any more*' (Mitra, 1993).

#### Source:

Sarin, M. Singh, N. M., Sundar, N. & Bhogal, R. K. (2003). "Devolution as a Threat to Democratic Decision-making in Forestry? Findings from Three States in India. Working Paper 197. Overseas Development Institute, London. Data retrieved from <http://www.odi.org.uk/fpeg/publications/papers/wp/197.html> November 2006.

Attempts like the World Bank supported Joint Forest Managements (JFM) and India Eco Development Projects have not contributed much to this impasse since it did not address core issues of community control and access to natural resources. When ecotourism development permeates these realms of control, the fundamental issues of community rights remain unresolved and the stewardship is shifted to the ecotourism industry and its players from the community.

## 4. Financial incentives and their impacts on community conserved areas<sup>14</sup>

At the national level, although the Ministry of Tourism – Government of India has outlined eco-friendly practices in its Ecotourism Policy & Guidelines, 1998, there are very few direct financial incentive schemes in place for supporting ecotourism. The thrust continues to be on incentives for infrastructure development, capital import subsidy, marketing assistance and promotion of ecotourism. Nonetheless, many state tourism policies and plans identify sites that are to be developed as ecotourism destinations with budgetary support but in most cases, such money goes towards building infrastructure and 'hardware' development rather than any conservation scheme. Whereas

ecotourism is supposed to be low-infrastructure and therefore low-impact activity, such high focus on infrastructure development goes against conservation principles. Although the Ecotourism Policy & Guidelines prescribe environment-friendly techniques like solar, recycling, rain-water harvesting etc, the incentives for incorporating such techniques do not exist.

Apart from these government-supported ventures, much of the investment in ecotourism in India has come from the private sector. Taj Hotels Private Limited, one of India's oldest and largest luxury hotel companies has made big forays into the ecotourism market. Apart from setting up ecological hotels and resorts all across the country, Taj has also begun investing in wildlife tourism in association with Conservation Corporation Africa (CCA) to set up gaming reserves in India. With over 485 sanctuaries and 87 national parks, it is highly lucrative investment<sup>15</sup>.

Other private investments in ecotourism have been mostly through local entrepreneurship, with varying degrees of scale and investment. These range from small-scale initiatives of running activities like house-boats and home-stays to investing in eco-resorts and slightly more sophisticated ecotourism products. These ventures, being locally based and owned also have a significant level of cumulative impacts on ecosystems as they tend to be clustered and more in number.

An important incentive and support for ecotourism in India has been from UN agencies like the UNEP and UNDP. While the former played a very active role in the International Year of Ecotourism process, the latter has supported different projects with ecotourism components through their livelihoods and environment programmes. One of the more recent UNDP ventures into tourism has been the UNDP-MoT Endogenous Tourism Project – a “novel ecotourism venture” that focuses on promoting rural arts and crafts through rural tourism at the village level. While the actual financial investment is not clear, development and conservation work through tourism is on the agenda of both UN bodies. However, there is nothing “eco” about this kind of tourism, but MoT promotes it as such; where the emphasis is on setting up ‘hardware’ (infrastructure), conservation here takes a back-seat.

Indirectly, World Bank supported projects like Joint Forest Management and India Eco Development Project have ecotourism as an integral market-based conservation scheme. The World Bank's India report<sup>16</sup> puts “*Ecological and ecotourism values from current JFM forests could be as high as \$1.7 billion as formerly degraded forests mature and begin to generate important conservation benefits*” and “*Ecotourism and carbon sequestration in forest areas have been estimated to increase national GDP share from forests from 1.1 to 2.4 percent*”.

## Conclusions:

Is ecotourism actually leading to conservation? If so, where are the examples to support ecotourism claims?

It is often stated that ecotourism leads to conservation and benefits to local communities. However, what is seen is that ecotourism is not very much different from mass-tourism.

Ecotourism is targeting areas that have been protected at the cost of communities, where:

- Communities have been displaced from their traditional habitats for the sake of conservation through convoluted policies that see no balance between conservation and people's rights.
- Communities have taken the initiatives for conservation and done a better job of it than government-led and international financial institution-supported schemes.

But ecotourism is poised to take over these areas. When conservation is possible through other means, which has been demonstrated, where is the need to bring in ecotourism when it has failed to achieve its conservation goals?

Ecotourism continues to be market-driven with governments allowing this to happen with their policies that are tailored to meet the needs of private enterprise. These private players are promoting ecotourism in the name of conservation whereas their practices are far from being conservation oriented or even supporting conservation efforts.

Conservation could happen if at least one or more of the following criteria are followed:

- If there is regulation being put in on ecotourism development in terms of infrastructure, tourist volumes or activities;
- If tourism profits are deployed for conservation purposes; and
- If there are genuine ecotourism efforts that would not have allowed mass-tourism to mushroom, thereby controlling development and hence leading to conservation.

In reality, these practices do not exist. What exist, however, are incentives that are geared to promote ecotourism and none for conservation.

## Endnotes

1 Friends of the Earth International (2005), “nature: poor people’s wealth - a position paper for the UN World Summit and the Review of the Millennium Development Goals, 14 - 16 September 2005”.

2 Paquin, Marc & Mayrand, Karel (2005). “MEA-based Markets for Ecosystem Services - Draft concept paper prepared for the OECD Workshop on Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and Private Investment, Helsinki, Finland, 16-17 June 2005”, Unisféra International Centre, data sourced from [http://www.unep.org/dec/docs/IIED\\_ecosystem.pdf](http://www.unep.org/dec/docs/IIED_ecosystem.pdf) November 2006.

3 For example, in his note on Incentive Measures to the 11th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity states that “market creation has often proved to be an effective means for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity”.

4 Community in this paper means both indigenous peoples and local communities.

5 “How Green is my tourism?”, Express Hoteliers and Caterers, 2004.

6 The international guidelines are:

Guidelines for the development of National Parks and Protected areas for Tourism of the UN WTO (World Tourism Organization)

PATA Code for Environmentally Responsible Tourism

Environmental Guidelines for the World Travel and Tourism Council ( WTTC)

The Himalayan Code of Conduct prepared by the Himalayan Tourism Advisory Board

Ecotourism Guidelines by The International Ecotourism Society.

7 The Policy defines ecotourism as drawn up by the UNWTO “tourism that involves traveling to relatively undisturbed natural areas with the specified object of studying, admiring and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals as well as any existing cultural aspects ( both of the past or present) found in these areas”. The policy enlists the key elements of ecotourism as being: a natural environment as the prime attraction; environment friendly visitors; activities that do not have a serious impact on the ecosystem; and a positive involvement of the local community in maintaining the ecological balance.

8 The one-page document simply states its vision to develop the Islands: ‘...as a quality destination for eco-tourists through environmentally sustainable development of infrastructure without disturbing the natural eco-system with the objective of generating revenue, creating more employment opportunities and synergies and socio-economic development of the island’ (Directorate of Information, Publicity & Tourism 2003.

[http://www.and.nic.in/Tourism\\_policy.doc](http://www.and.nic.in/Tourism_policy.doc)

9 <http://chhattisgarh.nic.in/tourism/tourism1.htm>

10 [http://www.mpecotourism.org/ecotourism\\_policy.asp](http://www.mpecotourism.org/ecotourism_policy.asp) data retrieved June 2008

11 [http://gov.ua.nic.in/uttaranchaltourism/Policy1\\_vision.html](http://gov.ua.nic.in/uttaranchaltourism/Policy1_vision.html)

12 The State Tourism Ministers Conference in 1996 that chalked out guidelines for the development of eco-tourism had identified the following resources for tourism development: Biosphere Reserves, Mangroves, Corals and Coral Reefs, Deserts, Mountains and Forests, Flora and Fauna, and Sea, Lakes & Rivers.

13 “Based on a ruling of the Supreme Court of India, the Indian Ministry of Forests and Environment passed an order to evict all encroachments from forested areas by the 30th of September 2002. While it is not clear how and whether this order has really affected the powerful and land hungry encroachers, it has created absolute havoc in the lives of the thousands of forest depended communities. Many of these people being thrown out of their houses and cultivated lands are people who have no other source of revenue and are being called encroachers because of their names having not entered the official land records for no fault of theirs”. An e-mail statement issued by Kalpvriksh - Environment and Action Group, India, September 2002.

14 A working definition of Community Conserved Areas (CCAs) has been given by Pathak et al (2006) as: “natural ecosystems (forest/ marine/ wetlands/ grasslands/ others), including those with minimum to substantial human influence, containing significant biodiversity value, being conserved by communities which depend on these resources culturally or for livelihood. Such conservation could be initiated and/or achieved with or without outside support. The crucial points being that; a) Effort leads towards maintenance or enhancement of a habitat and species therein. b) Local communities are the major players or among the major players in decision making and implementation of decisions”. Source: Pathak, N., Islam, A., Ekaratne, S.U.K., and Hussain, A. “Lessons Learnt in the Establishment and Management of Protected Areas by Indigenous and Local Communities in South Asia”, IUCN; data retrieved from <http://www.iucn.org/themes/ceesp/Publications/TILCEPA/CCA-NPathak.pdf> November 2006

15 Business Line, “Taj unveils a unique collaborative initiative to promote wildlife tourism”, August 2004. <http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/2005/06/02/stories/2005060200671700.htm>

16 World Bank (2006). “India - Unlocking Opportunities for Forest-Dependent People in India”, Agriculture and Rural Development Sector Unit, South Asia Region. Volume I (Report No. 34481 – IN). Data sourced from <http://www.worldbank.org.in/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/SOUTHASIAEXT/INDIAEXTN/0,,contentMDK:20873030~pagePK:141137~piPK:141127~theSitePK:295584,00.html>, November 2006.



# THE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT CONUNDRUM

IMPACTS AND CONFLICTS WITH PEOPLES' RIGHTS & CHALLENGES TO  
CONSERVATION OF PROTECTED AREAS IN INDIAN STATES



## 1. Introduction

Ecotourism is being pushed aggressively in and around terrestrial and marine protected areas - wildlife sanctuaries and national parks, and unprotected areas that are of significant ecological value. Many of these areas are inhabited by indigenous peoples. While these areas have been conserved by indigenous and local communities, they have been, very often forcibly, displaced from these areas for the purpose of conservation. In many Indian states the governments are still attempting to lure them out of the forest areas by promising monetary or land compensations. While the motive behind displacing the indigenous and local communities is stated by the governments as primarily for conservation, areas that were set aside by law for conservation have witnessed an increase in tourism activities.

Protected Areas in India have had a history of visitation even prior to their being declared as wildlife sanctuaries and national parks under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 as in the case of Corbett National Park and Kanha National Park. The volume however was small compared to the scale in which it happens today. However, the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 has allowed tourist activity inside the Protected Areas. Therefore, when newer areas get declared as protected under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, there is no problem for tourist related activities to happen in those areas e.g. in Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary in Chhattisgarh. There is also a tendency within the state forest, tourism departments and some tourism industry players to label as ecotourism any tourism activities that happen in these protected and unprotected areas. The Madhya Pradesh Ecotourism Development Board identifies Kanha and Bandhavgarh national parks as ecotourism destinations but not many

resort owners based there claim that they are into ecotourism. The label ecotourism seems loosely applied to market tourism to a growing but niche segment who wants more ecotourism. Some tourism players have used the term to indicate their a few eco-friendly practices that they have adopted. In India, ecotourism in practice generally is not much different from the way in which mainstream or mass tourism operates as it lacks the essential principles of environmental sustainability and equity in benefit sharing with indigenous & local communities. Therefore, in this paper, we shall use the term tourism rather than the generally misused “ecotourism”.

We have selected four states to understand the challenges that tourism development poses in the context of environmental impacts of tourism and involvement of institutions of local self government in tourism. These are the northern state of Uttarakhand, the central Indian Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and the Union Territory Andaman Islands. Ecotourism is actively being pursued in the Protected Areas of these states; even in Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh which have the special status of having Schedule V Areas<sup>1</sup>

## **Uttarakhand**

Uttarakhand became the 27th state of the Republic of India on 9th November 2000. The state was carved out of Uttar Pradesh. One of the reasons for the formation of the state was for greater autonomy to the people of Uttarakhand. It has a total land area of 51,125 sq km,<sup>2</sup> of which 93% is mountainous and 64% is covered by forest.<sup>3</sup> Protected Areas in Uttarakhand include the Jim Corbett National Park (the oldest national park of India) at Ramnagar in Nainital District, Valley of Flowers National Park and Nanda Devi National Park in Chamoli District, Rajaji National Park in Haridwar District, and Govind Pashu Vihar National Park and Gangotri National Park in Uttarkashi District.<sup>4</sup> The state has been a destination for mountaineering, hiking and rock climbing in India, a recent development in adventure tourism, in the region has been white water rafting and other adventures sports. Ecotourism, agri-tourism and rural tourism have also found new grounds in many villages of the state.<sup>5</sup>

The people of Uttarakhand are heterodox Hindus and Buddhists, while Sikh migrants from West Punjab have settled in the lowlands since 1947. The main indigenous tribes are Jaunsari, Bhotia, Buksha, Tharu and Raji. As a collection of smaller tribes, Jaunsari society is caste stratified with the indigenous Koltas as the main service caste and Khasa Brahmins and Rajputs as the main cultivators. Bhotias are subdivided into three main categories: The Jadhs of Uttarkashi, the Marchas (once mainly traders) and Tolchas (farmers) of Chamoli, and the Shaukas of Pithoragarh (near Dharchula). The Bukshas are inhabitants of the Terai. They have merged all their castes and even today, observe only septs (family names) among their people. The Tharus are a tribal Tibetan-related people that originally inhabited the eastern zone of the Terai, along the border with Nepal. They are subdivided into many sub-tribes, although a majority of them live in Nainital (now Udam Singh Nagar). As agriculturalists, Tharus tend to have large families that live communally, and it is traditional for brothers to live under one roof. The Rajis, also known as Vanrawats (forest lords) are few in number and live in the forest. They inhabit the woods around Ascot in southern Pithoragarh (now Champawat district). A few Muslim groups are also native to the area, although most have come recently. The Muslim Gujjars also migrate to the hills.<sup>6</sup> The Gujjars also inhabit forest areas such as in Rajaji and Corbett.

## **Madhya Pradesh**

Madhya Pradesh is the second largest Indian state in size with an area of 308,000 sq km.<sup>7</sup> The forest area of the state is 94,689.38 sq km constituting 30.71% of the geographical area of the state<sup>8</sup> There are<sup>9</sup> National Parks and 25 Sanctuaries spread over an area of 10,862 sq. km constituting 11.40%

of the total forest area. The national parks are: Bandhavgarh, Kanha, Satpura, Sanjay, Madhav, Van Vihar, Mandla Plant Fossils, Panna and Pench. The wildlife sanctuaries are: Bori, Bagdara, Phen, Ghatigaon, Gandhisagar, Karera, Ken, Ghariyal, Kheoni, Narsinghgarh, N. Chambal, Nauradehi, Pachmari, Panpatha, Kuno, Pench, Ratapani, Sanjay Dubri, Singhori, Son Ghariyal, Sardapur, Sailana, Ralamandal, Orchha, Gangau and V. Durgawati.<sup>9</sup> The state has been a destination for wildlife tourism, cultural and heritage tourism, and pilgrimages. The state plans to enter the leisure and business tourism.<sup>10</sup>

The total population of Tribals in Madhya Pradesh is 122.33 lakh constituting about 20.27% of the total population of the state. There are 46 Scheduled Tribal groups and 3 Special Primitive Tribal Groups. About 40.63% of total geographical area of the state is under the Tribal Sub Plan and 33.6% of total geographical area has been notified as Scheduled Area.<sup>11</sup> The tribal area of Madhya Pradesh can be divided into four main zones as follows:

1. Western Cultural Zone: Districts of Ratlam, Jhabua, Dhar, Barwani, Khargone, Khandwa, Harda, Dewas and Indore fall under this zone. The main tribes residing in this zone are Bhil, Bhilala, Barela and Patelia.
2. Central Cultural Zone: This zone comprises of Mandla, Dindori, Balaghat, Seoni, Chhindwara, Jabalpur, Katni, Narsimhapur, Sagar, Damoh, Umaria, Sehore and Bhopal. The main tribes residing in this zone are Gond, Pardhan, Korku, Baiga, Bharia, Nagarachi and Ojha.
3. North-Eastern Cultural Zone: Districts of Shahdol, Sidhi, Rewa, Satna, Panna, Chhatarpur, Guna and Tikamgar fall under this zone. Kol, Biar, Panika, Sour and Pav are the main tribes residing in this zone.
4. North-Western Cultural Zone: This zone consists of Morena, Shivpuri, Sheopur, Datia, Gwalior and Bhind districts. The main tribe residing in this zone is Seharia. Three Special Primitive Tribal Groups - Bharia (Patalkot, Chhindwara), Baiga (Umaria, Shahdol, Dindori, Balaghat and Mandla) and Seharia (Shivpuri, Sheopur, Guna, Gwalior, Morena) reside in Madhya Pradesh.<sup>12</sup>

## Chhattisgarh

Chhattisgarh, carved out of Madhya Pradesh came into being on 1st November 2000 as the 26th State of the Union. It fulfils the long-cherished demand of the tribal people.<sup>13</sup> The forest area of the state is 59,772.39 sq km.<sup>14</sup> It has 10.88% of its forests under Protected Area (PA) network. There are three national parks: Indravati, Kanger Ghati and Guru Ghasidas, and eleven wildlife sanctuaries: Achanakmar, Badalkhol, Bhairamgarh, Barnawapara, Gomarda, Pameda, Semarsot, Sitanadi, Tamor Pingala, Udanti, Bhoramdev.<sup>15</sup> The state has identified ecotourism, culture, heritage, ethno tourism, pilgrimages, adventure tourism, and business & leisure tourism as the thrust areas.<sup>16</sup>

The population of Chhattisgarh is notable for the high proportion of Scheduled Tribes and for specific sects primarily constituted of Schedule Castes. Of the total population of Chhattisgarh, tribals constitute at least 32.5%, which is a significantly high percentage. In the last few decades, the demographic profile of tribal dominated areas has undergone a change. This is a cause for concern as it represents large-scale intrusion of non tribals in tribal areas. This changing demographic profile is strongly evident in Bastar, where the proportion of tribals has decreased in the last few decades. According to the 1991 census the tribal population in the then districts of Chhattisgarh was Durg -12.6 %, Raipur - 18.6%, Rajnandgaon - 25.3 %, Bilaspur - 23.4 % Surguja - 54.8 %, Raigarh - 45.5%, Bastar - 67.7 %. The various tribes in the Chhattisgarh region are Gonds, Muria, Bhumja, Baiga, Kanars, Kawars, Halbas etc.<sup>17</sup>

## Andaman Islands

The Andaman & Nicobar are a group of picturesque islands, big and small, inhabited and uninhabited, a total of 572 islands, islets and rocks lying in the South Eastern Part of the Bay of Bengal.<sup>18</sup> The forests in the Andaman and the Nicobar group of islands occupy 7,606 km<sup>2</sup> or 92.2 per cent of the total geographical area of 8,249 km<sup>2</sup>; of this 5,883 km<sup>2</sup> is forests in the Andaman group and 1,723 km<sup>2</sup>, in the Nicobar group. (Note: The Directorate of Economics and Statistics puts the forest cover in 2006 as 5,629 km<sup>2</sup> for Andamans and 1,542 km<sup>2</sup> for the Nicobars). Of the total forest cover, dense forests with crown density of 40 per cent and above constitute 85.9 per cent, open forests with crown density less than 40 per cent constitute 1.7 per cent and mangroves constitute 12.7 per cent. The legally notified forests cover 7,170.69 km<sup>2</sup> (86.93 per cent of the geographical area); of this, 4,242 km<sup>2</sup> are protected forests and 2,929 km<sup>2</sup> are reserved forests. The A&NI are fringed by one of the most spectacular and extensive reefs in the world that hold significance nationally and globally as the last pristine reefs in the Indian Ocean. However, the extent of reefs in the A&NI is not accurately known yet and recent surveys report it as 11,939 km<sup>2</sup>. There are two protected areas for reefs in the Andamans – the Mahatma Gandhi Marine National Park and the Rani Jhansi Marine National Park, both having adjoining reefs that need inclusion.<sup>19</sup>

The Andaman Islands are home to four indigenous tribes. The Great Andamanese people numbered around 6,000 in the 1850s, when the islands were colonised by the British for establishing a penal colony. Today they number 43 and have been marginalised to Strait Island on the southeast coast of Middle Andaman. The Onge who now inhabit Little Andaman Island were the next to be contacted in 1920 and they met a fate similar to that of the Andamanese. The Sentinelese, estimated to be 39 in number, have for long inhabited North Sentinel Island 60 km southwest of South Andaman Island. The Jarawas are in the interior and west coast of South and Middle Andaman and currently number about 240.<sup>20</sup>

A dynamic demographic profile of the islands makes it difficult to define the term “local community”, as it does not constitute any homogeneous group. There are 503 inhabited villages in the A&NI of which 334 are in the Andaman District on eleven islands and the remaining 170 villages, hamlets, and small and individual family units on 12 islands in the Nicobar district. The total population according to the 2001 census is 356,152.<sup>21</sup>

## 2. People's Struggles in the States

The Constitutional provisions of the 73rd Amendment and Schedule V & PESA Act (refer sections below for details) that accord rights to indigenous and local communities to land and autonomy have not been adequately devolved by the state legislatures. The gradual increase in the struggles of indigenous peoples and local communities for human rights, constitutional rights and for cultural identity, rights over natural resources and common property resources (CPR), is seen as an obstacle by the governments. Often these voices of dissent are suppressed by use of state sponsored violence. The land of indigenous and local communities is continuously being encroached upon to usher in development that usurps not only their land but also their autonomy, control over their region and traditional rights and systems of self governance. Land for mining, dams, industries and power plants is appropriated even in Scheduled Areas in the under the guise of economic growth and development. Many of these areas are sites of conflict - seeing increasing violence and armed struggles as the demand for development that reaches people according their needs and aspirations is rejected and top down development measures that do not benefit local people are imposed.

While the state functions as facilitator cum real estate broker for acquiring land for industries, the common land of villages and people's rights over these common property resources in Scheduled Areas are handed out to private bidders. The ever decreasing availability of per capita common property resources have direct linkages to worsening the status of families that continue to depend on the CPRs to meet their daily needs, livelihoods, income needs and employment opportunities derived from the CPRs. The accelerated privatisation of common property resources and their decreasing geographical coverage is also increasing inequalities within the society, increasing hardship for women who collect these resources and thereby making worse the living standards of families at the bottom of the development pyramid. Though the state is just a trustee of these public resources, it has increasingly connived with industry to privatise these resources for commercial gain and therefore impeded free public use. On the other hand, extractive industries are allowed to operate even in protected areas and other ecologically sensitive areas, on government subsidies and incentives with procedures that streamline approval of these projects in the absence of any environmental or social impact assessment reports.

It is therefore that when the tourism industry makes an easy entry into these spaces, facilitated by governments that the local people ask "why the Taj is considered eco and not the Baiga"<sup>22</sup>.

**Figure 1:**

**Critical issues of study states in which**

**context tourism is located**

**Map source: Government of India**



### 3. Key Tourism Issues in the States

In order to understand the key tourism issues in the states the following sites were selected:

1. Uttarakhand – Corbett national park
2. Madhya Pradesh – Bandhavgarh and Kanha national parks
3. Chhattisgarh – Achanakmar and Barnwarapara wildlife sanctuaries
4. Andaman Islands – various tourism locations especially South Andaman Island, Havelock and Neil Islands

#### Uttarakhand

Created in 1955-56, it is the oldest National Park of India. It was one of the nine Tiger Reserves created at the launch of the Project Tiger in 1973. Corbett National Park lies in two districts – Nainital and Pauri. It covers an area of 521 sq. km and together with the neighbouring Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary and Reserve Forest areas, forms the Corbett Tiger Reserve over 1,288 sq. km.<sup>23</sup> The original area of the Park was 323.75 sq. km. to which 197.07 sq. km. was added later. An area of 797.72 sq. km. was added as buffer of the Corbett Tiger Reserve in 1991. This area includes the whole of Kalagarh Forest Division (including 301.18 sq. km. area of Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary), 96.70 sq. km. of Ramnagar Forest Division and 89 sq. km.<sup>24</sup>

Tourism is allowed in selected areas of Corbett Tiger Reserve.<sup>25</sup> The main tourism areas in Corbett are Dhikala, Jhirna, Bijnor, Sonanadi and Domunda. Only day visits in conducted safaris are allowed in the tourism areas in vehicles approved by the Forest Department and accompanied by a Forest Department trained and licensed guide. For night halts three tourist complexes located at Dhikala, Gairal and Bijnor offer a choice of accommodation type. Dhikala has the maximum bed capacity including a dormitory. Basic lodging is available for tourists at other Forest Rest Houses at Malani, Sultan, Gairal, Sarpduli, Khinanauli, Kanda and Jhirna. Visitors can also stay at the Forest Rest Houses at Lohachaur, Rathuadhab, Halduparao, Mundiapani, Morghatti, Sendhikhal and Dhela.<sup>26</sup> Apart from these, there are many resorts, lodges and hotels in Ramnagar and Dhikuli, which are on the border of the Park. The number of tourism establishments in Dhikuli alone has been estimated as 49 along a stretch of 18 km.<sup>27</sup>

Corbett remains open to tourists from 15th November to 15th June. The main reason for closure of the Park during the rest of the year is that during the monsoons most of the roads get washed away. Repair work starts after the rains end and it is only by November that roads are back in motorable condition.<sup>28</sup> The number of visitors to Corbett in 2006-07 was 139,047, with 130,714 domestic tourists and 8,333 foreign tourists.<sup>29</sup>

#### Key Tourism Issues

The Corbett National Park has been a heavily visited area for many years. This heavy influx of tourists has led to visible stress signs on the natural ecosystem. Excessive trampling of soil due to tourist pressure has led to reduction in plant species and has also resulted in reduced soil moisture. The tourists have increasingly used fuel wood for cooking. This is a cause of concern as this fuel wood is obtained from the nearby forests, resulting in greater pressure on the forest ecosystem of the park.<sup>30</sup> Additionally, tourists have also caused problems by making noise, littering and causing disturbances in general<sup>31</sup>.

*The development of private tourism resorts around Corbett began in early 1990s. The tourists who came to Corbett earlier were the serious types but the profile of tourists has changed considerably over the years. Now the tourists who come mainly from cities are not interested in wildlife and nature, but rather want to only have a sighting of the tiger. The way tourism is handled in Corbett gives an impression that Corbett belongs to the tourism industry. There is also no proper interpretation centre for the tourists.*

*The [migratory] corridors around Corbett have been choked due to the coming up of the resorts. This has led to an increase in human – animal conflict.*

*Villages around Corbett have been displaced by resorts and in many instances land belonging to Scheduled Tribes has been purchased in connivance with the government.*

*There is lot of sewage that is being dumped in the Kosi River from the resorts. During weekends and other holidays [when there is a surge of tourists] resorts play music loudly, which disturbs the local people and the animals in the forest.*

- Pers. Comm. with Ganesh Rawat, journalist, Ramnagar, 8th November 2008

*Corbett receives around 3,000 visitors per day during the tourist season, but most of them do not come to the bazaar and stay in the resorts. So where is the question of local people benefitting from tourism? The only opportunities for local people are to run Gypsies (safari vehicles) inside the Park and some of them get employed as guides.*

*Tourism in Corbett is very expensive and is beyond the reach of low budget tourists. Therefore, facilities for low budget tourists should also be created. In this regard, home-stay facilities could be created in Ramnagar by involving the local Panchayat. These could be marketed by the Kumaon Mandal Vikas Nigam.*

*There is serious issue of land around Corbett. While the norm in Uttarakhand is that people from outside Uttarakhand cannot buy more than 100 sq m of land without the permission of the District Magistrate and stating clear reasons; upto 100 sq m can be bought without permission; there has been large scale transactions of land in Dhikuli, Marachula (near Ramganga River) and Dhela. The cost of land has increased to Rs. 40,00,000 per bigha<sup>32</sup> while it was only around Rs. 50,000 per bigha ten years back.*

*The Government listens only to resort owners & not local people. To make a submission local people have to make roads block, whereas government officials are sitting in resorts and addressing their issues. No resort owner is interested in addressing over all development issues of the area like education, transportation etc, from which they will also be benefitted. Similarly, the Forest Development will hold discussion with resort owners and not with local traders association.*

- Pers. Comm. with Prabhat Dhyani, Editor, Uttarakhand Prabhat Times, Ramnagar, 8th November 2008

Human – animal conflict in Corbett has also been attributed to tourism when a woman was killed by a tiger in Dhikuli on the periphery of the Corbett National Park. A media report states: “The tiger was declared a man-eater after it killed a woman who had entered the buffer zone of the reserve three days ago. It has also attacked two people who were riding a motorbike. We have all options open to deal with this now. It may be eliminated if it cannot be caught,” says Vinod Singhal, director, Corbett Tiger Reserve. But the problem, he admits, is man-made. “This particular tiger did not tolerate the presence of elephants (carrying tourists) and used to charge at them. He gradually lost his fear of humans.

Tourism around the park is a problem. Ideally, it has to be checked,” says.<sup>33</sup> The story is further corroborated by the woman Bhagwati Devi’s husband, B. C. Nainwal who says “It is the policies of the government that made the tiger a victim of public ire ... The tiger was roaming near Dhikuli for four-five months. The main reason was elephant safaris by resorts here. They are known to throw meat in front of the tiger to increase the sighting of the big cat.”<sup>34</sup>

## Madhya Pradesh

### Kanha National Park

Kanha is one of the oldest wildlife sanctuaries in India and is spread over Mandla and Balaghat districts. It was declared as a reserve forest in 1879 and upgraded to a wildlife sanctuary in 1933. It was declared as a National Park in 1955 and then declared as a tiger reserve in 1973. It covers an area of 944 sq km, which forms the core zone of the Kanha Tiger Reserve; the surrounding area of 1,009 sq km is the buffer zone. The neighbouring 110 sq km Phen Wildlife Sanctuary forms micro-core of the Kanha Tiger Reserve. Between 1969 and 1998, 27 villages were relocated from the core zone of the Park.<sup>35</sup>

The Park is open to tourists from 1st October to 30th June, and it remains closed between the monsoon months of July and September. There are two entry points to the Park namely Khatia and Mukki. Tourists are allowed in two batches during morning and afternoon between 6.30 am – 10.30 am & 2.30 pm – 5.30 pm. Only light petrol and diesel vehicles with four-wheel drive manufactured in the last 5 years are allowed inside the park.<sup>36</sup> Each vehicle has to be accompanied by a Forest Department trained and licensed guide. A total of 140 vehicles are allowed per day. Most of the vehicles are locally owned.

Accommodation is provided by both government and private establishments. While some government lodges are located inside the Park, the private lodges are concentrated around the two entry points namely Khatia and Mukki.<sup>37</sup> The Forest Department puts the capacity of accommodation to 500 beds. Kanha received 97,258 domestic tourists and 8,573 foreign tourists during the year 2007.<sup>38</sup>

### Bandhavgarh National Park

Bandhavgarh has been an excellent habitat of tiger and is known for the highest density of tigers in the world. The area of 105 sq km was notified in 1968 as a National Park. The remaining part of the National Park i.e. 343.842 sq. km. is yet to be finally declared though State Government had made the initial notification in 1982. Panpatha Sanctuary with an area of 245.847 sq. km. was declared in 1983. Considering the importance of the National park, it was included in the Project Tiger Network in 1993. The adjoining Panpatha Sanctuary too was declared as a part of the Reserve.<sup>39</sup> It is located in the Umaria District of Madhya Pradesh.

Like Kanha, the Park is open to tourists from 1st October to 30th June, and it remains closed between the monsoon months of July and September. Tourism is restricted to 105 sq km of the Tala Range, which amounts to 23.4% of park area. The tourism zone is divided into three zones and each zone has limited vehicle entry. There are two entry points: Tala & Gohri gates in two batches during morning and afternoon between 6.30 am – 10.30 am & 2.30 pm – 5.30 pm. Around 50 vehicles are allowed inside the Park per day.<sup>40</sup> Only light petrol and diesel vehicles with four-wheel drive manufactured in the last 5 years are allowed inside the park<sup>41</sup> and have to be accompanied by a Forest Department trained and licensed guide. Most of the vehicles are owned by local people and resort owners.

Tourism started when craze for wildlife tourism increased. Initially in the 80's visitors were fewer than 1,000 per year. The tourist arrivals picked up slowly. During 90's the number rose to 2,000 and in the last year (2007) the number of tourists increased to 60,000 per year. Of these, around 20,000 are foreigners and rest domestic. The number of tourists during holidays and weekends is very high. Now there is restriction to the tourist entry based on the carrying capacity study<sup>42</sup>. From January 2008, the park has started online bookings for safaris. Bandhavgarh received 55,835 domestic tourists and 13,706 foreign tourists during the year 2007.<sup>43</sup>

Accommodation is available at the Forest Rest House run by the Forest Department and at White Tiger Forest Lodge run by the Madhya Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation.<sup>44</sup> The private establishments are located in the areas of Tala – Ranchha (4 resorts), Tala (15 resorts), Tala – Bijheria (9 resorts) and Gohri Gate (1 resort).<sup>45</sup> Additional six hotels were due for completion and commencement of operations in 2009.<sup>46</sup>

## Key Tourism Issues

The local people mainly get jobs as guides and safari vehicle drivers. There are 57 guides and around 80-90 safari vehicles in the village owned by local villagers and resorts. The guides are selected from surrounding villages, which are about 166 villages in a periphery of about 5 km in the buffer zone. The guides earn Rs.150 per day during the tourist season and the safari vehicle drivers<sup>47</sup>. There are 57 guides and around 80-90 safari vehicles in the village owned by local villagers and resorts. The guides are selected from surrounding villages, which are about 166 villages in a periphery of about 5 km in the buffer zone.<sup>48</sup> The guides earn Rs.150 per day during the tourist season and the safari vehicle drivers earn around Rs. 2,000 per month. The tourists give them a good amount as tips.<sup>49</sup>

In the hotels and resorts, they get jobs as helpers and room boys.<sup>50</sup> Some of them get jobs in resorts for cleaning and grass cutting.<sup>51</sup> The villagers also get jobs as labourers with the Forest Department in activities like water hole management and fire protection.<sup>52</sup> Sometimes resorts like the Taj<sup>53</sup> and other resorts conduct tribal dances wherein local people are paid around Rs. 700 – 1,000 for a performance.<sup>54</sup>

The primary occupation of local people is agriculture and in the tourism season people seek employment in hotels and resorts. Therefore, the availability of people gets reduced in agriculture. The people work for about of 15-20 days in the tourism season and their monthly incomes [during the tourism season] have doubled on an average from Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 4,000. This has led to availability of expendable incomes with the local people, which they are now spending on consumption of alcohol. In the broader socio-cultural context of the area, women more than men are engaged in labour (agriculture and other work). However, none are employed in hotels except during the construction phase. Employment in hotels is considered as a social taboo for women.<sup>55</sup> Overall, most of the employment (managers, front office staff, and waiters) is given to non-locals.<sup>56</sup> The tourism establishments do not source materials from the local markets.<sup>57</sup> Hence there is very little benefit to the local economy.

Many tourism establishments use firewood as fuel for heating and cooking, and for organising camp fires for the tourists.<sup>58</sup> The firewood is collected from the forests by the local people who in turn sell it to the establishments.<sup>59</sup> As there are many tourism establishments still being built, there is a lot of demand for mud-bricks. The kilns, where these mud-bricks are manufactured, use timber to fire the kilns and the timber is extracted from the forests by local people.<sup>60</sup> The construction of tourism establishment also uses a lot of bamboo and bally (poles of young trees), which are extracted mainly from those forest areas that are not within the national park.<sup>61</sup> This has led to depletion in the vegetation cover of the area.

The existence of non-biodegradable solid wastes like plastic bags, covers, wrappers, bottles, tea cups and glasses is posing a serious problem to the well being of the local environment. There have even been deaths of domestic and wild animals due to consumption of plastic carry-bags<sup>62</sup>, which are often disposed with left-over of food stuff inside them. The animals are attracted by the smell and since they cannot take the food stuff of the carry bags, they consume the food stuff along with the carry bags.

## Chhattisgarh

### Achanakmar Wildlife Sanctuary

The Achanakmar wildlife sanctuary was constituted in the year 1975 it comprises of 557.55 sq km.<sup>63</sup>

Most of the visitors are day tourists. There is a guest house that is run and managed by the CG Forest Department.

An information / interpretation centre has been established beside a café, where photographs of the forests, flora & fauna have been displayed. There is a resort named Jungle Resort, owned by Dr. Anish Deshkar from Bilaspur that is inside the wildlife sanctuary. It has three rooms with 3, 4 and 6 beds respectively and is mostly used by Bengali tourists during the peak tourist season of October to January. Visitation statistics to Achanakmar were not available with the authorities.

### Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary

Located in northern part of Mahasamund district of Chhattisgarh, Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary is one of the finest and important wildlife sanctuaries in the region. Established in 1976 under Wild Life (Protection) Act of 1972, the sanctuary is relatively a small one covering an area of only 245 sq km.<sup>64</sup>

Barnawapara receives around 25,000 tourists during the year. Most tourists are day visitors. During the Pushpunni mela (local festival held on 31 Jan every year), around 70,000 tourists come in personal vehicles. The revenue generated from tourism in Barnawapara in 2007-08 was Rs. 15,60,000.<sup>65</sup>

About 40-45 local youth have been trained as guides and their fee is Rs. 60 / trip / hour. Their training has been on introducing themselves and the PA; filtering food stuff, water bottles, packed material and plastic bags; preventing tourists from getting down from the vehicles. The guides can explain a little about birds and plants mostly in local names, but communicating with foreign tourists is difficult as they don't know English.<sup>66</sup>

### Key Tourism Issues

The scale of tourism is very low as compared to other places like Kanha and Bandhavgarh national parks. Therefore there are no substantial impacts of tourism in these wildlife sanctuaries. The presence of a private resort inside the Achanakmar Wildlife Sanctuary is a matter of concern and it is a clear violation of Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 (see figure 2). However, the Chhattisgarh Forest Department, in a bid to promote ecotourism, has constructed a luxurious resort in a forest area adjacent to the Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary, the case study of which has been described.

The Chhattisgarh Forest Department has completed construction of an “eco-resort” on the periphery of the Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary (see figure 3). The land belongs to Chhattisgarh Forest

Figure 2:  
View of Jungle Resort, Achanakmar Wildlife Sanctuary  
Source: EQUATIONS, 2008



Development Corporation. Total cost of construction is Rs. 2.16 crore. The resort has 6 cottages in 2 blocks and has a capacity of 24 beds, along with a reception centre, restaurant and staff quarters. The resort is electrified by a 10KW solar unit, installed at a cost of Rs. 15 lakhs. The reason for opting solar as the source of electricity was out of necessity as there is no other power supply to these areas. The resort has been handed over to the Chhattisgarh Tourism Board for running and management. The property is being considered for privatisation.<sup>67</sup> The Chhattisgarh Tourism Board considers privatisation through the PPP model (public-private partnership) as a good option. The main activity of the Chhattisgarh Tourism Board is to create infrastructure and hand them over to private players to operate. The private players will accrue benefits and the State will be benefitted through collection of taxes. The Board is also of the view that the government should not run hotels rather they should be more involved in creating infrastructure and marketing destinations.<sup>68</sup>



**Figure 3:**

Views of Mohda Eco Resort, Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary

Source: EQUATIONS, 2008

The Mohda Eco Resort is located in a forest and on the banks of a lake, which are common property resources. The diversion of forest land to a non-forest purpose can be challenged under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. While this project is a clear case of diversion of forest land for commercial purposes, what is even more serious is its transfer to private parties. The common property resources of the forest and water-source, which could have been used by the local people, have now been segregated for the exclusive use and enjoyment of tourists.

## **Andaman Islands**

The main tourism locations in the Andaman Islands are Port Blair, Wandoor, Ross Island, North Bay, Mount Harriet, Chidiyatapu, Baratang, Diglipur, Havelock, Neil, Mayabunder, Rangat, and Jollybuoy, Red Skin in the Mahatma Gandhi Marine National Park. The number of tourists who visited Andaman Islands in 2006 were 1,18,648 domestic tourists and 9,051 foreign tourists.<sup>69</sup> There is low seasonal variation within the year for domestic tourists but the numbers are slightly higher in the months of November, December and January. However, for the foreign tourists, there is high intra-year seasonality with peak season being mid October – mid March.<sup>70</sup>

## Key Tourism Issues

For most domestic tourists, the reason for choosing the Andamans as a holiday destination is the leave travel concession (LTC) provided by the central government and for foreign tourists, it is the past experiences and recommendations of other tourists. While the beaches and the pristine natural beauty of the Andamans is a motivating factor for both domestic and foreign tourists, the latter also come to Andamans for snorkeling and diving.

The main social issues of tourism in the Andamans are that there is some resentment about rise in prices of essential goods, fruits, vegetables that the local people attribute to tourism. There is dissent over attire of foreign tourists and fears of local youth aping western culture and values, lifestyle. Tourism has given women some opportunities to enter economic activities although the industry still tends to be dominated by men. Presently there is not too much evidence of child labour but this could increase especially with increase in migrant labour. There is low evidence of tourism-linked prostitution currently in the Andamans, however fears exist that this is on the rise. Tourism-related crime is on the rise in few Islands although these incidents have been sporadic and subject to varying interpretations. Tourism related drug abuse and drug peddling is present in the Islands. By and large tourists, especially women, perceive the Andamans as a safe destination (96.5% of domestic and 90.7% of foreign tourists perceived the islands to be a safe destination).<sup>71</sup>

However, tourism's impact on the indigenous tribes – the Jarawas – is a matter of serious concern as there is continuing use of the Andaman Trunk Road despite the Supreme Court of India's order in May 2002 to close it down in six months. Tour operators take tourists, especially domestic tourists, on expectations of seeing 'primitive, naked tribes'.<sup>72</sup> The main concern is that the Jarawas do not have immunity against many diseases like measles. Any contact with other people would mean increasing their vulnerability to such diseases. For the Jarawa, each disease is an epidemic to which many have lost their lives.

Tourism currently does not seem to play a significant role in terms of the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) and employment, contrary to popular belief and policy positioning. Despite significant increase in tourist arrivals over last 2 decades, contribution of sector to GSDP has stagnated at 8% due to low local expenditure by tourists. Revenue generation from tourism is low and accounts for only 1.4% of total revenue receipts. Employment in the tourism sector is less than 1.5% of total main workforce of the Islands and a substantial percent of the workforce does not get secure employment in tourism. The tendency is to recruit skilled labour from Port Blair or mainland. The local workforce employed is only in low-skill and seasonal kind of jobs. There is evidence of local entrepreneurship in tourism – 50% of accommodation units within Port Blair and in other Islands are owned by locals. Tourism has created some jobs in the ancillary industry - taxi, auto drivers, shop owners, guides, but these are of a seasonal nature.<sup>73</sup>

But what are more alarming are the environmental impacts of tourism in the Andamans. There is already a strain of other development activities and population pressure on natural resources of Andamans and its biodiversity. Tourism, which is largely unregulated and unplanned, has led to increased pressure on fresh water availability. The tourism infrastructure is inconsistent with the ecological setting and is very energy intensive. There is a serious problem of waste disposal and pollution from solid wastes: the sewage is disposed directly into the sea and the solid wastes are allowed to accumulate, then burnt (see figure 4). Land based development activities and tourist activities like snorkeling have had an impact on the coral reefs. The former has led to sedimentation that has choked the corals (as they are filter feeders) and the latter due to physical damage. Important regulations like the Coastal Regulation Zone Notification, 1991 and environmental impact assessments have not been implemented and tourism has violated them consistently. There has also been poor implementation of Orders of the

Figure 4:

One of the many solid waste dumping sites in Havelock Island, Andaman Islands (note the high content of non-biodegradable solid wastes like plastic bags, covers, wrappers and bottles)

Source: EQUATIONS, 2007



Supreme Court based on the Shekhar Singh Commission Report. These impacts are critical to be taken note of seriously in the context of the impacts from climate change wherein Islands are the most vulnerable.<sup>74</sup>

## 4. Common Tourism Issues in the States

### Regulating Tourism Growth around PAs

The growing number of tourism establishments on the boundaries of National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries is a matter of concern. While the Wild Life (Protection) Act 1972 does allow tourists into Protected Areas, it clearly disallows private, commercial establishments to be located inside. Presently, there is no regulation or control on the number of tourism establishments coming up on the

peripheries of Protected Areas.<sup>75</sup> The Indian Board for Wildlife, the apex advisory body in the field of wildlife conservation in the country, in its XXI meeting in January 2002 resolved that “lands falling within 10 km of the boundaries of National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries should be notified as eco-fragile zones under section 3(v) of the Environment (Protection) Act and Rule 5 Sub-rule 5(viii) & (x) of the Environment (Protection) Rules”. Despite this, a rash of tourism establishments are found cheek by jowl in the immediate periphery of every Protected Area of repute like Corbett, Bandhavgarh, Kanha. Newer Protected Areas like Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary have also begun to see tourism establishments coming up on their peripheries.

The Madhya Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation (MPTDC) has also come up with scheme to boost private investment for tourism development around Protected Areas. The scheme seeks to invite investment for building hotels, resorts, entertainment centres, golf courses etc in “chosen locations that have immense potential and investor-friendly politico-administrative environment”.<sup>76</sup>

The MPTDC will facilitate land acquisition for private investors. They have stated that a land bank has been created by identifying pieces of land spread over eleven districts of the State namely Jabalpur, Umariya, Chhattarpur, Dhar, Indore, Tikamgarh, Ujjain, Bhopal, Panna, Seoni and Narsinghpur. Specific areas have been identified within these districts from which pieces of land will be leased out for 90 years on freehold or public-private partnership basis. The MPTDC has identified land for creating banks around the Bandhavgarh National Park in Umariya district for construction of resorts and recreation centres. Land for construction of resorts and hotels is also available within 10 km distance of the Panna Tiger Reserve at various locations in Janwar, Jardhowa Tara, Sakeria, Amjhiriya and similarly at Seoni which is 9 km from Pench National Park. It intends to build world-class infrastructure around national parks and sanctuaries for attracting high end tourists. The investment scheme seeks to boost tourism infrastructure development as close as possible to national parks and wildlife sanctuaries. Schemes such as these do not take into account the impacts of tourism development on the boundaries of Protected Areas.

Protected Areas do not have physical boundaries such as fences. The surrounding areas of Protected Areas have many different land uses ranging from forests, agriculture land or fallow land (agriculture land that has been left uncultivated), to human settlements and even intensive activities like mining. In the case of Protected Areas discussed above, land use is mostly forests and agriculture, fallow land. These areas are used by wildlife for various purposes like finding food and water in other areas when there is less available inside the Protected Areas and periodic migration. When the population of species increases inside the Protected Areas, the animals have the ability to spread to the surrounding areas, or use the corridors to move to other habitats.

The development of tourism establishments around Protected Areas hinders the use of surrounding areas and also blocks the movement of animals to other forest or protected areas through the corridors.<sup>77</sup> The animals are then forced to enter human habitations thereby increasing the possibility of human-animal conflicts. These conflicts have lead to damage and loss of property as well as human and animal lives.

The other problems are of habitat loss and fragmentation due to infrastructure developments like constructions of roads.<sup>78</sup> The location and numbers of resorts crowding on the periphery of the Park has become such a severe problem in Corbett that the local people are considering filing a Public Interest Litigation on this issue.<sup>79</sup>

## Disregard for Provisions of the Constitution (Seventy Third) Amendment Act, 1992

The Constitution (Seventy Third) Amendment Act, 1992 (also known as the 73rd Amendment) requires a three tier system of Panchayati Raj Institutions to be constituted for decentralisation and devolution of powers from the Centre to the grassroots in order to enable these bodies to function as institutions of local self government. The 73rd Amendment further requires the Legislatures of all Indian States to delegate decision making powers on issues specified under Schedule XI of the Indian Constitution to the Panchayats to enable them to plan and implement schemes for their social and economic development on, among others, land improvement, land reforms and maintenance of community assets.<sup>80</sup> The panchayats have also been given the powers as institutions of local self government to decide on the kind of development that they would like in their areas of jurisdiction. They have also been empowered to impose taxes, tolls and duties through a law by the state legislature.

The panchayats are not consulted when tourism projects or plans are prepared by the governments, private investors or companies. The panchayats get to know about the project or plans at the implementation stage only after all clearances have been given by various other departments. Whereas clearances on power, water supply and sewage are given by the electricity department and public works department respectively, the issue of land allocation and conversion if any is done at the District Collector's level and the panchayats have no say in land matters. The role of the panchayats is then reduced to a formality<sup>81</sup> when a letter of intent is written to the panchayats for specifying purpose of land-use<sup>82</sup> and a 'No Objection Certificate' is requested from the panchayats. At this stage, the panchayats do not refuse because clearances have already been given by other departments.

*"There is no dialogue with local panchayats and departments take decisions unilaterally on any kind of developmental activity. No body is informed of any projects that they [government or industry] make ... When the tourist resort [ecotourism venture of the Chhattisgarh Forest Department] was inaugurated by the Chief Minister on 26 July 2008, there were no discussions with the local people; in fact the local people were prevented from meeting the CM. At least the main people of the village could have been invited but even that was not done. Ironically the theme of the inauguration programme was 'handing over to people' and the people were not invited. The CM had come with nearly 20 other cabinet ministers. It would have been appropriate if they had visited a few villages and inquired about their conditions ... There are many tourism resorts that have come up on the periphery [of the Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary] and the permission is given by the Chhattisgarh Forest Department. [That is because] The land is owned by government".*

- Mr. Niranjan, Panchayat Pradhan, Loridkhar Village, Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary, Chhattisgarh.<sup>83</sup>

*"The role of the panchayats is a formality ... With respect to land, all matters are done at the Registrar's level and there is no role for the panchayats".*

- Mr. Rajesh Singh, Sarpanch, Tala Village Panchayat, Bandhavgarh, Madhya Pradesh.<sup>84</sup>

*"I am not looking at large scale tourism and do not want cement construction and very big resorts coming into Neil. The Panchayat needs to be careful that their land is not sold out to industrialists from outside. The Panchayat is helpless regarding plans to develop tourism in the Island. There are not enough funds to maintain cleanliness on the beaches. The Administration has to provide the funds or take over maintenance"*

- Ram Krishna Biswas, Pradhan, Neil Island, Andaman & Nicobar Islands<sup>85</sup>

The case of Kanha National Park is of special relevance to the issue of implementing the 73rd Amendment because it falls in the category Schedule V Areas. Article 244 of the Constitution of India through its Schedule V provides protection to the indigenous peoples living in the Scheduled Areas and gives them the right to self rule. It disallows the transfer of indigenous peoples' lands to non-indigenous peoples. The 73rd Amendment is applicable in Schedule V Areas through the Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas (PESA) Act, 1996 to improve the system of participatory governance in the Scheduled Areas. The Constitution of India through the Schedule V along with the Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA) re-enforces the rights of the indigenous peoples to territorial integrity and to decide on their own path of development. Within a year of passing of this Act, i.e. by 24 December 1997, all the states with Scheduled Areas were to amend their existing Panchayati Raj Acts and incorporate the PESA provisions. The PESA Act in recognition of the traditional and customary laws of the tribal areas mandates the gram sabhas to:<sup>86</sup>

- a. Approve the village's plans & projects for social and economic development before they are implemented by the Gram Panchayat.
- b. Identify beneficiaries for poverty alleviation programmes.
- c. Give certification for utilization of funds by the panchayat for the mandated activities, thus making the gram sabha a powerful instrument in socio economic development of the tribals.
- d. The gram sabha or panchayat at the appropriate level has to be consulted before any land acquisition is done for development projects in Scheduled Areas or before rehabilitation of project affected families is undertaken.

The Kanha National Park is spread over two tehsils namely Bichhiya Tehsil in Mandla District and Baihar Tehsil in Balaghat District (see figure 5). The entire district of Mandla and Baihar Tehsil are under Schedule V status. Tourism development in and around Kanha National Park is a case that exemplifies the violation of the Constitutional provisions in Schedule V Areas. What has been observed in the case of Kanha National Park is a growing number of private, tourism establishments that are added every year. Both at the Khatia gate and Mukki gate, there are nearly 70 tourism establishments and distributed roughly as: 40 near the former and 30 near the latter. Land is continuously being sold locally and is being bought over by investors to build tourism establishments like hotels, resorts and lodges (see figure 6).



**Figure 5:**  
**Location of Kanha National Park in Schedule V Areas of Madhya Pradesh**  
Source: [www.indiabiodiversity.org](http://www.indiabiodiversity.org)

Figure 6:  
Advertisements for sale of land  
near Kanha National Park  
Source: EQUATIONS, 2008



The figure above shows an advertisement for sale of land claiming it is in a general category (meaning it is not in a Schedule V Area). However, a Central Government Order<sup>87</sup> issued by the Ministry of Law and Justice<sup>88</sup> clearly states that the whole of Mandla District and Baihar Tehsil in Balaghat District are Scheduled V Areas. Therefore, the claim that the land on sale is general category or non-Schedule V land is false. It is likely that most land transactions relating to tourism establishments around Kanha National Park are unconstitutional and illegal. But this continues quite brazenly.

Additionally, the Chhattisgarh Government is providing incentives to investors for establishment and expansion of tourism units and infrastructure for economic development and employment generation. In this Incentives Scheme the government is also inviting tourism units to be established in Schedule V Areas namely Kanker, Dantewara, Koria, Surguja and Jaspur Districts. Under this scheme tourism projects will be given “quick approval” by a High Level Committee who will “remove all obstacles to

tourism initiatives".<sup>89</sup> The Chhattisgarh Government is providing 100% tax exemption for establishment of tourism units in Schedule V Areas. Though land transfer is not allowed, the Chhattisgarh Tourism Board offers a 50% exemption on land premium to investors for new tourism projects as well as simplifying the process of land allocation to investors, which has been diverted for tourism; creation of land banks by identification of Nazul land<sup>90</sup> which will be transferred to the tourism department for leasing it out to developers for 33 years. Similarly tourism infrastructure projects are being encouraged into Scheduled Areas by giving them a 15% subsidy on capital investment with a cap of Rs. 20 lakhs.<sup>91</sup> The Tribal Advisory Councils that represent interests of the resident tribal population has no role in tourism development in their areas. None of these are permissible in Scheduled Areas and the spirit of privileging tribal rights and autonomy – which is the basis on which the state was formed – seems to have been discarded quite summarily by those who are supposed to protect and ensure these very rights!

## 5. Conclusion

Tourism is being actively pursued by the state governments and tourism industry. The natural areas with their aesthetically appealing landscapes and attractions such as wildlife are the important products for tourism. This form of nature based tourism is often used interchangeably with attractive terms such as ecotourism and wildlife tourism.

Ecotourism is presented and positioned as leading to conservation and benefits to local people. In reality however the operating paradigm is to make it private investment led and through privatisation of resources. The tourism policies of Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Andaman Islands are examples of this kind of ecotourism development.

Tourism in Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Andaman Islands has disregarded Constitutional provisions. It has disregarded the rights of the panchayats by keeping them out of decision making spaces and taking control over resources such as land thereby contravening the 73rd Constitutional Amendment. It has also usurped common property resources that are important for the sustenance and livelihoods of indigenous and local communities. Therefore its claims of conserving the environment and benefitting indigenous and local communities are hollow and have not been met. Moreover, tourism is currently being pushed into areas where indigenous and local communities have been struggling for basic rights such as land, autonomy and access to resources on which their livelihoods are dependent. In places like Kanha, tourism development has taken place in contravention to the Constitutional provisions of Schedule Areas.

While the claims of tourism to conserve environment and benefit local people have not materialised, it continues to be pushed into newer areas on hollow promise and claim of its immense potential to create employment and consequently alleviate poverty. However the costs of tourism on local resources, livelihoods, environment, culture, women and children are not taken into account. In the absence of local participation and decision making over tourism projects and the governments' apathy to local grievances and development needs, an atmosphere of distrust, fear and conflict has begun to take place. Tourism is thus turning out to be like any other activity that gives benefits to a few at the cost of many.

Given its poor record, there is no justification for governments to privilege the promotion of tourism over peoples' rights. The Constitutional provisions of the 73rd Amendment, Schedule V Areas and PESA Act need to be fully implemented and enforced while planning tourism development in these areas.

## Endnotes

1 Scheduled Areas mean "... such areas as the President may by order declare to be scheduled areas". Scheduled Areas have a predominantly tribal population and provide autonomy to the tribal areas. Central and State laws are not automatically applicable to the Schedule Areas. With respect to land in these areas, the Constitution lays down in Article 244(1) Part B Section 5 (2) that the governor has the power to make regulations that may prohibit or restrict the transfer of land by or among members of the Scheduled Tribes to non-tribals, and also regulate allotment of land to members of the Scheduled Tribes.

2 Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam, <http://www.gmvnl.com/newgmvn/facts/index.aspx> data retrieved April 2009

3 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uttarakhand>

4 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uttarakhand>

5 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uttarakhand>

6 Rawat, 1999, "The People of Uttarakhand", <http://uttarakhand.prayaga.org/info4.html> data retrieved April 2009.

7 <http://www.mpinfo.org/mpinfonew/english/factfile/mp.asp> data retrieved April 2009

8 Madhya Pradesh Forest Department, <http://mpforest.org//forest.html> data retrieved April 2009

9 Madhya Pradesh Forest Department, <http://mpforest.org//wildlife.html> data retrieved April 2009

10 Madhya Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation, <http://www.mptourism.com/tourpol.html> data retrieved April 2009

11 <http://www.trdi.mp.gov.in/statistics.asp> data retrieved April 2009

12 Government of Madhya Pradesh, <http://www.mp.gov.in/tribal/Tri.htm> data retrieved April 2009

13 Chhattisgarh Forest Department, [http://cgforest.nic.in/about\\_chhattisgarh.htm](http://cgforest.nic.in/about_chhattisgarh.htm) data retrieved April 2009

14 Chhattisgarh Forest Department, <http://cgforest.nic.in/forestresources.htm> data retrieved April 2009

15 Chhattisgarh Forest Department, <http://cgforest.nic.in/livingwithwildlife.htm> data retrieved April 2009

16 Government of Chhattisgarh, <http://www.chhattisgarh.gov.in/tourism/tourism1.htm> data retrieved April 2009

17 Government of Chhattisgarh, <http://www.chhattisgarh.gov.in/profile/corigin.htm#seed> data retrieved April 2009

18 Andaman & Nicobar Islands Administration, <http://www.and.nic.in/Know%20Andaman/Intro1.htm> data retrieved April 2009

19 EQUATIONS et al, 2008, p 16

20 EQUATIONS et al, 2008, p 18

21 EQUATIONS et al, 2008, p 21-22

22 Stated by a participant from the Baiga tribe at a consultation "Tourism Development in Chhattisgarh: Threats and Challenges" on 25-26 January 2007, organised by Nadi Ghati Morcha and EQUATIONS.

23 [http://www.corbettnationalpark.in/page\\_ctr\\_revealed.htm](http://www.corbettnationalpark.in/page_ctr_revealed.htm) data retrieved April 2009

24 Project Tiger – Ministry of Environment & Forests, Government of India, <http://projecttiger.nic.in/corbett.htm> data retrieved April 2009

25 [http://www.corbettnationalpark.in/page\\_visit\\_ctr.htm](http://www.corbettnationalpark.in/page_visit_ctr.htm) data retrieved April 2009

26 [http://www.corbettnationalpark.in/page\\_visit\\_ctr.htm](http://www.corbettnationalpark.in/page_visit_ctr.htm) data retrieved April 2009

27 Information shared by participants at a Consultation on Tourism Issues in Uttarakhand organised by EQUATIONS at Ramanagar on 8 February 2009

28 [http://www.corbettnationalpark.in/page\\_visit\\_ctr.htm](http://www.corbettnationalpark.in/page_visit_ctr.htm) data retrieved April 2009

29 Uttarakhand Forest Department, 2007, Uttarakhand Forest Statistics, Government of Uttarakhand, Dehradun, p 83.

30 Tiwari, P. C. & Joshi, Bhagwati (Eds.), 1997, "Wildlife in the Himalayan Foothills: Conservation and Management", Indus Publishing Company, p 309.

31 Ibid, p 311.

32 1 bigha = 43,200 sq ft, which is a little less than an acre (1 acre = 43,560 sq ft); therefore 1 bigha = 4,017.6 sq m (@ 1 sq ft = 0.093 sq m)

33 Sinha, N, Feb 2009, "Tiger declared maneater in Corbett, forest dept blames tourist pressure", Indian Express, New Delhi (<http://www.indianexpress.com/news/tiger-declared-maneater-in-corbett-forest-dept-blames-tourist-pressure.../420907>) data retrieved April 2009

34 Kaur, R, 2009, "Unlikely Maneaters" Down to Earth, Centre for Science & Environment, Delhi.

35 Madhya Pradesh Forest Department, <http://mpforest.org/Intranet/kanha/index.html> data retrieved April 2009

36 Madhya Pradesh Forest Department, <http://mpforest.org/Intranet/kanha/index.html> data retrieved April 2009

37 Madhya Pradesh Forest Department, <http://mpforest.org/Intranet/kanha/index.html> data retrieved April 2009

38 Tourist arrivals statistics obtained from MPTDC

39 Project Tiger – Ministry of Environment & Forests, Government of India, <http://projecttiger.nic.in/bandhavgarh.htm> data retrieved April 2009

40 Pers. Comm. with Mr. Asim Srivastav, Field Director, Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve, at Tala on 30 January 2008.

41 Madhya Pradesh Forest Department, <http://mpforest.org/bandhavgarh.html#BANDHAVGARH> data retrieved April 2009

42 The Carrying Capacity that the Madhya Pradesh Forest Department has adopted is limited only to the number of safari vehicles that are allowed inside the Protected Areas. The concept does not apply to any other tourism activity like number of establishments around the Protected Area. Carrying Capacity has been calculated based on the principle:

Physical Carrying Capacity = No. of persons/unit area which is equivalent to No. of vehicles/unit length

Calculation of number of vehicles have been done based on the following conditions:

1. At least there should be a gap of 500m between two vehicles. ie. Within 1 km, there can be 2 vehicles.
2. Roads prone to moderate erosion (dusty), reduce the number such that one vehicle is allowed within 1 km.
3. Roads prone to heavy erosion, (slopes), reduce the number such that one vehicle is allowed within 2 km.
4. In sensitive areas (breeding period/endangered species), one vehicle will be allowed per km. Management efficiency of the park officials: 40%

E.g.: Let us take total length of the road to be 125 km.

As per condition 1, total vehicles allowed  $125 \times 2 = 250$  nos. Roads prone to moderate erosion be 20km. Applying condition 2, no. of vehicles allowed =  $20 \times 1 = 20$  nos.; reduction =  $(20 \times 2) - 20 = 20$  nos. Roads prone to heavy erosion be 10km Applying condition 3, no. of vehicles allowed =  $10 \times 1/2 = 5$  nos.; reduction =  $(10 \times 2) - 5 = 15$  nos. Roads within sensitive habitat be 50 km Vehicles allowed = 50 nos. Total reduction =  $(50 \times 2) - 50 = 50$  nos. Total vehicles allowed in 125 km stretch after reductions =  $250 - 20 - 15 - 50 = 165$  Efficiency of the forest staff = 40% Therefore total number of vehicles that can be allowed =  $165 \times 40/100 = 66$  nos. Source: Pers. Comm. with Dr. P. B. Gangaopadhyay, Chief Wild Life Warden, Madhya Pradesh Forest Department, on 1 February 2008.

43 Tourist arrivals statistics obtained from MPTDC

44 Madhya Pradesh Forest Department, <http://mpforest.org/bandhavgarh.html> data retrieved April 2009

45 Pers. Comm. with Mr. Satyendra Tiwari, Skays Camp, Tala on 19 September 2008.

46 Pers. Comm. with Mr. K L Patel, Manager, White Tiger Forest Lodge, Madhya Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation, on 31 January 2008.

47 The most popular safari vehicles are the Maruti – Suzuki manufactured Gypsy model, which is a four wheel drive SUV.

48 Pers. Comm. with Mr. Asim Srivastav, Field Director, Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve, at Tala on 30 January 2008.

49 Pers. Comm. with Dr. Deepak Patel, Jungle Tours & Travels at Tala on 31 January 2008.

50 Pers. Comm. with Mr. K L Patel, Manager, White Tiger Forest Lodge, Madhya Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation, on 31 January 2008.

51 Pers. Comm. with Dr. Deepak Patel, Jungle Tours & Travels at Tala on 31 January 2008.

52 Pers. Comm. with Mr. Asim Srivastav, Field Director, Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve, at Tala on 30 January 2008.

53 The property is Mahua Kothi and is a joint venture between Taj Hotels Resort and Palaces and & Beyond.

54 Pers. Comm. with Dr. Deepak Patel, Jungle Tours & Travels at Tala on 31 January 2008.

55 Pers. Comm. with Mr. Rajesh Singh, Sarpanch, Tala Gram Panchayat on 18 September 2008.

56 Pers. Comm. with Mr. Satyendra Tiwari, Skays Camp, Tala on 19 September 2008.

57 Pers. Comm. with Mr. Rajesh Singh, Sarpanch, Tala Gram Panchayat on 18 September 2008.

58 Pers. Comm. with Mr. Satyendra Tiwari, Skays Camp, Tala on 19 September 2008.

59 Pers. Comm. with Mr. K L Patel, Manager, White Tiger Forest Lodge, Madhya Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation, on 31 January 2008.

60 Pers. Comm. with Mr. Satyendra Tiwari, Skays Camp, Tala on 19 September 2008.

61 Pers. Comm. with Mr. Satyendra Tiwari, Skays Camp, Tala on 19 September 2008.

62 Pers. Comm. with Mr. Rajesh Singh, Sarpanch, Tala Gram Panchayat on 18 September 2008.

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76 Madhya Pradesh State Tourism Development Corporation, "Investment Opportunities In Tourism Sector of Madhya Pradesh", 1998-2007, <http://www.mptourism.com/MPTPDF.pdf>, retrieved on March 2009

77 Pers. Comm. with Dr. H. S. Pabla, Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (Wildlife), Madhya Pradesh Forest Department, on 8 October 2008.

78 Pers. Comm. with Dr. H. S. Pabla, Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (Wildlife), Madhya Pradesh Forest Department, on 8 October 2008.

79 Shared by participants at a Consultation on Tourism Issues in Uttarakhand organised by EQUATIONS at Ramanagar on 8 February 2009

80 Land improvement, implementation of land reforms, land consolidation and soil conservation (point no. 2 of the XI Schedule of the Constitution of India). The panchayats also have right to take decision on social forestry, farm forestry and minor forest produce; fuel and fodder; construction of roads, culverts, bridges, ferries, waterways and other means of communication in the panchayat.

81 Pers. Comm. with Mr. Rajesh Singh, Sarpanch, Tala Gram Panchayat on 18 September 2008.

82 Pers. Comm. with Mr. Satyendra Tiwari, Skays Camp, Tala on 19 September 2008.

83 Pers. Comm. with Mr. Niranjan, Panchayat Pradhan, Loridkhar Village on 13 September 2008.

84 Pers. Comm. with Mr. Rajesh Singh, Sarpanch, Tala Gram Panchayat on 18 September 2008.

85 Pers. Comm. with Mr. Ram Krishna Biswas, Pradhan, Neil Island, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, July 2007.

86 Legal aid system on local governance, 2004, <http://www.laslg.org> data retrieved March 2009.

87 No. C.O.192: The Scheduled Areas (States of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh) Order, 2003 dated New Delhi, the 29th February, 2003

88 (Legislative Department) Notification G.S.R. 114 (E), Tribal Research and Development Institute, <http://www.trdi.mp.gov.in/tribalZone.asp> data retrieved March 2009

89 <http://www.chhattisgarhtourism.net/download/Incentive%20Scheme%202006.pdf>, data retrieved March 2009

90 Nazul land is the land which is given on lease by the municipal authorities to private persons for non-agricultural purposes. This type of land being barren, no agricultural activity is possible on it.  
[http://ncm.nic.in/major\\_iniative.html](http://ncm.nic.in/major_iniative.html)

91 <http://www.chhattisgarhtourism.net/download/Incentive%20Scheme%202006.pdf>



## WOMEN SPEAK!

### WOMEN'S ENGAGEMENT WITH COMMUNITY BASED & NATURE BASED TOURISM



Tourism has always had a link with women. Mass tourism claims that it employs more women than men and women are often seen as the face of tourism, quite literally, as they appear in travel brochures as the ubiquitous image of warmth, welcome and hospitality.

When understanding tourism growth in natural resource rich areas we have been particularly interested in understanding how the growth of tourism engaged, impacted, helped or hindered women. To what extent did tourism actually provide opportunities for empowerment? To what extent did it change stereotypes and gender injustices? Were women able to break the shackles of religious or social prescriptions related to their role and relative power by engaging in tourism as compared to more traditional roles and settings? What was the nature of women's participation in tourism? To what extent did they influence decision making and the nature of tourism? Did they gain – economically, socially, and politically? Have they been able to challenge patriarchal structures and demand equal participation and benefits from tourism? How did tourism impact their lives? What are their concerns & dilemmas and in what ways have they engaged or wish to engage with tourism?

To explore these questions, we have attempted to gather together and amplify the voices of women in different spaces which we heard in the course of our interactions with communities engaging with tourism.

To do this we present case studies of nature based (and in most cases community based) tourism and examined it through a gendered lens. The observations and insights are derived from more general contexts and were not specific to research addressing gender issues.

## Mountain Shepherds Initiative, Uttarakhand<sup>1</sup>

Mountain Shepherds Initiative (MSI) is a community owned and operated ecotourism initiative based in Uttarakhand. It attempts to engage with the local communities and their youth to harness the potential of tourism in the larger interest of the local community. The initiative is a result of the long struggle of communities in the Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve for control over land, forests and natural resources. MSI works with vision of developing a model for tourism that is sustainable and defined by the local and indigenous communities residing in the Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve. The MSI has trained local youth in mountaineering and trekking, instructions and mountain search and rescue for taking tourists groups on expedition. Another tourism component of MSI is the homestays that they provide to tourists in collaboration with local communities in areas like Lata and Tolma.

“The Mountain Shepherds story begins in Lata, a village situated in the Niti Valley. The people of the Niti Valley belong to an Indo-Tibetan ethnic group known as the *Bhotiya*. Those in the Niti Valley belong to the Marchha and Tolcha groups and have traditionally gained a livelihood as transhumant shepherds, traders, or farmers. In the 1970s, *Bhotiya* communities were at the forefront of the famous Chipko movement<sup>2</sup> that saw village women led by Gaura Devi to save their forests. From 1998 to the present, they have persisted in their efforts to regain access rights to the Nanda Devi National Park. With the creation of Uttarakhand state and its emphasis on the tourism sector, this movement gave birth to the Nanda Devi Campaign in Lata village. Sparked by the urgent need to ensure local control of the tourist trade, the campaign issued the progressive 2001 Nanda Devi Biodiversity Conservation and Eco Tourism Declaration to guide its future. In 2003, the Indian government made a major revision to the park rules that had strictly governed the Nanda Devi protected area for over twenty years. A partial reopening began allowing 500 visitors to enter a small segment of the park’s core zone every year, although the peak itself would remain off limits.”

MSI was formerly inaugurated in 2006 in the vicinity of the Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve. It is located both in the context of a wider social and environmental struggle. A 2006 Inaugural Women’s Trek marked their first foray into the tourism business, attempting the challenging task of establishing a community-owned operation in keeping with its aspirations for a future without human exploitation and environmental degradation<sup>3</sup>.”

Women’s participation in the tourism initiative of MSI is largely prescribed by social norms - the roles that women are allowed to participate in are decided by the community first and then their family. Therefore women’s participation in tourism is not only gendered but also decided primarily by the family and community and this is accepted by women. The participation of girls in tourism is at a very nascent stage in Lata village, and it is too early to say if this will enhance women’s participation in decision making within the family and the community in the future. Though girls are being trained in mountaineering it has not meant that families are sending their daughters on regular expeditions. The family and community has clearly different norms about what ways the daughters participate in tourism as compared to the freer hand that sons have to decide if they would like to be involved in the tourism project of the MSI.

Apart from their traditional roles of carers within the family and thus caring for the visitors, this community based initiative also relies on women’s traditional skills in carpet weaving. Thus traditional

knowledge and skills are the basis for including women into the tourism loop. Most tourism initiatives often end up employing women in areas where they need least additional training and can leverage on socially prescribed or traditional knowledge and skills such as care giving. In the MSI case, on the contrary though women are not primarily involved in looking after the guests since the youth trained by the MSI cater to the tourists, the payment for using the homestays by tourists is handed over to the landlady (i.e the women). With a range of Rs. 150- 250 per day in Tolma and Lata respectively going to women directly it is a positive move that acknowledges their contribution (for the use of the place as well as the labour in keeping it clean and providing bedding for tourists). To some extent it also recognises the time intensive nature of women's work who being involved in agricultural activities are less likely to have the time to engage with tourists.

Women are also involved in the production of souvenirs during the winter months (Figure 1). They produce smaller hand woven mats for yoga or meditation purposes. Tourism provides a market for their produce and thus an alternate income particularly to those households that are not providing homestays or involved in any other ways in tourism. It is an attempt to provide tourists with local souvenirs; relying on their traditional knowledge of weaving and knitting and by enhancing their skills through the introduction of vegetable dyes.

**Figure 1:**  
**Bhotiya women weaving mats & carpets,**  
**Lata Village, Uttarakhand**  
Source: EQUATIONS, 2008



The MSI being community based has a stronger element of community support when compared to many other tourism initiatives that are introduced without much local participation.

The greater participation of men in tourism activities such as trekking and mountaineering which includes working as instructors, search and rescue volunteers, cooks and guide for tourists groups has also meant a diversion of responsibilities in agriculture work earlier handled by men to women. The women are loaded with the usual household responsibilities and in addition because the men are away the entire load of caring for children, collection of fuel wood, fodder and water take them in the hilly terrain.

Further more, the peak harvesting season is also the main tourism season and this has resulted in men being away for tourism linked activities leaving the women to shoulder a greater (physical) workload at this time. It is interesting that this incursion of women into men's traditional (gendered) areas is not objected to by the community, but they are more unwilling to "allow" the women to engage in activity which is more externally-oriented.

Sunil Kainthola who coordinates MSI in Dehradun shared a story of one of the MSI youth Raju whose mother told him in a "friendly" manner: *"You have taken my husband with you, you have also taken away my two sons into tourism. Now it will rain any moment. Our grain will get spoilt unless we harvest it. Then what will we eat? There is no one to work with me – so now you come with me to the village and work with me."*

Thus women's additional load directly and indirectly because of tourism ends up fetching them very little direct economic benefit – in the form of additional earnings – but loads them with additional work – all of which is neither measured, valued nor compensated for in economic terms.

From another perspective given the exploitative nature of tourism with respect to the commodification of women and abuse, the community at Lata has taken into account the risks that women are likely to face when tourism makes inroads into their spaces. The community (both men and women) who decide the norms then become the buffer to decide which roles it would like to see its women in, given their knowledge and skills. The Bhotiya women were at the leadership of the Chipko movement in asserting their rights to natural resources. Whether this assertion has translated to their choice of ways of income generation is not very clear or evident yet. Some families have allowed the daughters to be trained in mountaineering and related courses but tourism led business activities is new for the communities and may also explains the absence of women in business activities.

With the MSI core competence and product being adventure tourism in the Himalayas the organisation has greater involvement of boys and less of girls. In certain areas like Uttarakashi women like Bachendri Pal<sup>4</sup> are role models for women taking up training in mountaineering and instructorship. While girls are being encouraged to train in becoming instructors it is a physically demanding role and this aspect seems to draw more boys. Beginning with training provided by the forest department in 2004 and that provided by MSI in 2006, girls have gone on three treks since 2006 with exclusive women's groups as well as in mixed groups (of boys and girls) with tourists.

MSI has also taken a firm stand on guiding the community about the roles where women may have opportunity but increased vulnerability to exploitation by tourists. It has created a space for discussing about what roles women would be comfortable in taking up rather than just going by the demand of the tourism industry which can be exploitative when unchecked. The opportunity to train girls in mountaineering was a step forward, but the decision was that girls would accompany women only

groups. This was seen as a via media between the complexity of developing spaces for women to participate in tourism, recognising the risks in terms of sexual harassment they may face from male tourists while accompanying them on treks and balancing this risk, with the desire to build their capacity for leadership and management roles that have not been socially encouraged so far. In the future MSI foresees the participation of women in souvenirs, exclusive as well as mixed trekking groups, as instructors after they complete their Method of Instruction and in managerial roles.

## Andamans and Nicobar Islands

The Andaman & Nicobar Islands (A&NI) are a group of picturesque islands and islets lying along a long and narrow arc in the south-eastern part of the Bay of Bengal. While relatively isolated until the early twentieth century, these islands of breathtaking natural beauty gained slowly in popularity as a tourist destination. As in many other parts of the country, tourism has been identified a priority sector for development in the Islands, particularly the Andamans. The Andaman and Nicobar Islands harbour a rich biodiversity with high endemism, making them an internationally acknowledged hotspot for biodiversity. Large areas of coral reefs, which hold significance as the last pristine reefs in the Indian Ocean, lie outside protected areas, with very little protection efforts going into them. The mangroves are also known for their diversity of various marine organisms. Over the years, the swampy areas in lowland evergreen forests have been almost totally destroyed by conversion to agriculture and open swamps have also been drained in a number of places, making this an increasingly rare habitat. It is clear that any further ecological degradation will have an adverse impact not only on the unique biodiversity of its fragile coastal ecosystems but also on coastal fisheries and tourism.

The Andaman Islands are home to four indigenous tribes: The Great Andamanese; the Onge, who inhabit the Little Andaman Island; the Sentinelese, who have long inhabited North Sentinel Island and the Jarawas, in the interior and west coast of South and Middle Andaman. During the British colonisation, house sites and agricultural lands were allotted to “convicts” who had been jailed at the Cellular Jail. In 1925, around 45 Karen families from Burma were brought to clear the forest. Between 1947 and 1971, as part of a policy move of the Indian Government to meet labour requirements in the Islands, people from then East Pakistan, West Bengal, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Bihar were settled in the Islands. Post 1970s, the A&NI have seen an unplanned influx of people from Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Bihar, whereby the annual growth rate of this influx has far exceeded the average decadal growth of population in the Islands (approximately 4.8% p.a). Settlement and thoughtless “civilisation” attempts have led to the decimation of the original tribal people and they are confined to reserves with uneasy relationships with the settlers. Among those who came in, the diverse profile and stakeholding has led to some tensions raising the issue ‘who belongs to the Islands and who does not’.

While the islands have witnessed a steady growth in tourist numbers along with the steady push of the A&NI administration to bring the tourists back to the islands post Tsunami in 2004 has led to an increase in the number of proposals for intensive tourism development particularly in the Andaman Islands. This includes huge investment in infrastructure, improved connectivity and concessions on LTC for domestic tourists. However, these plans, like earlier ones, are not based on how tourism operates in and impacts the Islands, and do not consider whether ground realities support the assumptions that these plans are based on.

In 2008 EQUATIONS along with partner organisations undertook a comprehensive research study to examine the status of tourism, its existing and likely impacts and the likely impacts of proposed tourism development plans.<sup>5</sup>

While the level of tourism activity in the Andamans is high, women are involved in comparatively low profile jobs like running petty shops for selling fish and fruit. Men constitute the majority of the work force in tourism establishments 89.3% are male and only 10.7% is female.<sup>6</sup> Thus women in general have lower employment opportunities even within tourism much like in other sectors.

Tourism has affected the lives of the women in the Islands, whether they are associated with it directly or not. One success story is of three women – Rajni Ika, Pandiamma and Kanti Tirku – who got together as members of a self-help group to start an eatery in Havelock Island in December 2006 (Figure 2). They are in contact with the guides in Port Blair who refer tourists to their eatery. They make a profit of Rs 12,000 a month which is shared between the three of them. The usual problems of the island, such as acute shortage of water and rising prices of vegetables need to be dealt with, but they are happy with the change in their lives that tourism has brought in.

**Figure 2:**  
**Restaurant run by women's SHG in**  
**Havelock Island, Andaman Islands**  
**Source: Seema Bhatt, 2007**



However, the tale is not all good for other women on Havelock Island. Nirmala Rao is a widow who works as a daily wage worker. For her, tourism is an added burden to her daily problems. Because of

increased tourism activity she finds the prices of travelling by *autorickshaw* (*a three wheeler*) have risen tremendously. During the peak tourist season boat tickets to Port Blair are hard to come by. Concerns are voiced by women about rising land prices and the disillusionment of the youth. Arathi Roy, a housewife of Havelock says, “The government has brought us here (as settlers). Now they are allowing foreigners to get land here. In the future the government may sell out on us”. She also fears that children and youth will imitate foreigners in behavior and mode of dress. The level of education of the youth tends to be low. While tourism is the only sector on the Islands that increases opportunities, by opening up jobs like taxi driving and guides, she also raises an alarm by drawing attention towards the increasing habit of drinking alcohol, with easy availability in the Islands. “Prostitution could be a serious problem in the future”, she fears.

## Endogenous Tourism Project<sup>7</sup>

The Endogenous Tourism Project-Rural Tourism Scheme (ETP) is a joint project of Government of India-Ministry of Tourism and United Nations Development Programme (GoI-UNDP) to support the rural tourism initiatives of the GoI which would serve to create sustainable livelihood opportunities among low income communities living in rural areas through the setting up of alternative models of tourism. The GoI-UNDP Project Document clearly locates this project in context of development and social justice, ethics, sustainable human development, elimination of poverty, addressing inequalities and inequities. Thus a unique feature and indeed core principle of the ETP is to examine and take further the links between tourism and development<sup>8</sup>.

While the ETP project was aimed at the economic objective of making livelihoods sustainable and employment generation through community based actions, it also aimed at empowerment of women, marginalised communities and youth, as well as gender equality through a convergence between the economic and social issues. EQUATIONS was commissioned in 2008 to review the ETP in an attempt to garner in a participative manner the experiences and learning of this large scale and ambitious effort. We highlight in the section below aspects that relate to the role and impacts on women<sup>9</sup>.

When tourism is introduced into rural communities with the aim of social and community empowerment, it is often assumed that communities are homogenous in an economic and social sense. Our study of the community based tourism projects in several rural sites found that when tourism aims for empowerment by involving women in strong patriarchal societies it creates social tensions between the two sexes. When women take on a greater role in tourism activities and begin to demand a greater role in decision making in these traditional and conservative societies, it challenges the “superior” role that patriarchy assigned to men.

Patriarchal norms, caste and gender are central to define the nature of participation of women in tourism. These social norms define whether women can actually take up roles of influence and decision making, even if these roles are architectured into the project.

Hodka, near the astoundingly beautiful and stark Rann of Kutch (a cold Desert) in Gujarat, is an extremely conservative community where the women lived in pardaa<sup>10</sup> in the hamlets. When the model of tourism that the community could engage in was first debated, the idea of homestays was strongly resisted by the communities. They did not want the tourists to come to stay in their village. The community decided that their engagement with tourism would be in the form of a resort outside the boundaries of their hamlet – which ensured a kind of containment of the dangers of tourism, along with a desire to reap its benefits!

Their norms were not only about women and clearly were about preserving strongly held cultural norms – many of which were also deeply patriarchal. They also felt that tourists should not be scantily dressed in shorts. Consuming alcohol was forbidden in their society and so they didn't want the visitors to come and have alcohol and expose their younger generation to this habit<sup>11</sup>.

While Hodka has many elements of a successful foray into tourism women who were initially a part of the Hodka Paryatan Samiti left this Village Tourism Committee (VTC) - due to social taboos and pressures resulting in the management of the Shaam-e-Sarhad resort being completely male. There is an institutional framework within the ETP that seeks to address gender issues by challenging existing power structures, but the social structures proved too hard to break through. The strong resistance by the men towards the participation of women in any of the decision making forums in Hodka was evident. Although a group of women are involved in the plastering and designing on the walls of the resort, women, largely have been denied access to any decision making body.

In Raghurajpur, near Puri-Orissa, a temple and crafts village, the Raghurajpur Heritage & Tourism Committee (RHTC – village tourism committee) is completely devoid of women. When the sub-committees were formed, women were not even consulted. They were conspicuously absent in all the sub committees except for one, the sanitation committee! Despite the presence of a women's group in the village it is not represented in the RHTC.

Similarly at Lachen in Sikkim there was a lack of participation of women in decision making structures and process related to the project. This is also due to the fact that under the Dzumsa (form of local self governing body) structure the scope for participation and decision making of women is generally low. In contrast, in Chitrakote, Chhattisgarh, tribal dominated area women have a leadership role to play in the implementation of the ETP. Here there was a special effort by the implementing agency to build capacity, empower women and to mobilise their participation in the functioning of the Village Tourism Committee (Figure 3).

Figure 3:  
Women Members of Village Tourism Committee, Chitrakote  
Source: EQUATIONS, 2008



Often women's contribution to family income is seen as marginal and their work as unskilled. Thus even in tourism though women are involved in skilled tasks like craft production, they continue to be seen as unskilled while men's contribution is considered skilled owing to the gendered perception of men as bread winners of the family. In Raghurajpur for instance women contribute equally in the production of the crafts like *Pattachitra* (traditional Orissa paintings on palm leaves) which is the main and often only source of livelihood to many in the village (Figure 4). The women do all the labour intensive ground work but the men are perceived to have the skills to do the finer aspects of the craft. In reality the women are no less creative in their artistic excellence, but this is not acknowledged.



Figure 4:  
A Pattachitra, Raghurajpur  
Source: EQUATIONS, 2008

Women are not a homogenous group within a community. Access to tourism activities and benefits is defined also by the social hierarchy of caste (which is invariably linked to class). Caste and class act as gatekeepers allowing certain sections of women within community to participate while excluding others. e.g in Naggar (Himachal Pradesh), the VTC's bias towards upper caste women does not go unnoticed. When the community was asked to choose three members from each ward, they have invariably chosen women from the more affluent upper caste families believing they would be in a better position to represent and understand the implementation of the project. However decisions by upper caste women do not necessarily take into account the voices or interests of lower caste women and often caste affiliations play a stronger role than the sympathy for common concerns as women. An examination of the norms for membership in the Village Tourism Committees that have been evolved by the communities often tilts the balance in favour of certain dominant communities over marginalized sections. Since backward castes themselves are not allowed easy access to decision making positions within the VTCs by upper castes even within these tourism committees the situation is similar in the case of women from backward castes.

In Chitrakote a major conflict emerged on the issue of the construction of shops near the waterfall site. The objective was to sell handicrafts and food to the tourists and thereby promote the products of the craftsmen and women trained under the project and local cuisine also promoted under it. The

Panchayat and the local administration jointly decided to provide 5 acres of government land out of an 11-acre plot where the annual local festival takes place. It also started building shops near the waterfall on the government land. Some vested interest groups came together and demolished the nearly completed beautiful structures. To date no legal or police action has been taken against the perpetrators and they have not been brought to book.

The very nature of tourism is that it requires infrastructure skills, capital and linkages to engage successfully – and in the limited space available women from lower and backward caste have a double handicap of gender and caste and are usually out of the reckoning. Unless carefully planned and designed it seems very unlikely particularly in rural setting in India that social and gender inequities can be addressed in any significant way through tourism projects.

## Conclusion

These initial case studies point to the opportunities that women have in carefully designed tourism projects to carve out more meaningful roles and wield greater influence. But much depends on the context of socio-cultural norms of patriarchy and caste to determine the extent to which they can benefit. The need to address these issues through systematic awareness building of tourism policy makers, planners and implementers, as well as local communities is critical.

## Endnotes

1 EQUATIONS field notes to Uttarakhand – villages Lata and Tolma, September 2008

2 In the 1970s, an organized resistance to the destruction of forests spread throughout India and came to be known as the Chipko movement. The name of the movement comes from the word 'embrace', as the villagers hugged the trees, and prevented the contractors' from felling them. The first Chipko action took place spontaneously in April 1973 in the village of Mandal in the upper Alakananda valley and over the next five years spread to many districts of the Himalayas in Uttar Pradesh. It was sparked off by the government's decision to allot a plot of forest area in the Alaknanda valley to a sports goods company. This angered the villagers because their similar demand to use wood for making agricultural tools had been earlier denied. With encouragement from a local NGO, Dasoli Gram Swarajya Sangh, under the leadership of an activist, Chandi Prasad Bhatt and women of the area, went into the forest and formed a circle around the trees preventing the men from cutting them down. In March 1974, women from Lata, Reni and other nearby villages led by the elderly Gaura Devi protested against men that had come to clear cut local forests. The Chipko protests in Uttar Pradesh achieved a major victory in 1980 with a 15-year ban on green felling in the Himalayan forests of that state by the order of Mrs Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India. Since then, the movement has spread to many states in the country. (<http://healthy-india.org/saveearth6.asp>)

3 Rajiv Rawat (2008). The Mountain Shepherds Initiative: Evolving a New Model of Community-Owned Ecotourism In Redefining Tourism – Experiences and Insights from Rural Tourism Projects in India, UNDP, New Delhi

4 Bachendri Pal was the first Indian woman on top of Everest in 1984. She was born in 1954, in a village named Nakuri in Garhwal. She shared with her parents her desire to become a professional mountaineer. The family was "devastated," as for them, her relatives and local people, the most suitable job for a woman was teaching, not mountaineering. However, Bachendri did not budge from her determination. She joined the Nehru Institute of Mountaineering (NIM). She was declared the best student and was considered as "Everest material". She currently runs a training camp at Tata Steel Adventure Foundation. ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bachendri\\_Pal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bachendri_Pal))

5 EQUATIONS, INTACH Andamans & Nicobar Islands Chapter, Society for Andamans & Nicobar Ecology, Kalpvriksh, Jamshedji Tata Centre for Disaster Management – TISS, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Action Aid International India (2008) "Rethink Tourism in the Andamans: Towards Building a Base for Sustainable Tourism", Bangalore, India.

6 Ibid, pg 126

7 EQUATIONS (September 2008), Review Report on Sustainability In Tourism: A Rural Tourism Model, UNDP, New Delhi

8 Ibid pg 3

9 Ibid pg 49-62

10 Purdah or Pardaa (literally meaning 'curtain') is the practice of preventing women from being seen by men.  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pardah>

11 EQUATIONS (September 2008), Review Report on Sustainability In Tourism: A Rural Tourism Model, UNDP, New Delhi, pg 44



# ECOTOURISM ON THE PERIPHERY OF BANDHAVGARH AND KANHA TIGER RESERVES

AN APPROACH PAPER

*“For Eco- Tourism to work one has to master ‘Eco’ and master ‘Tourism”*  
Dhruv Singh (runs Anantvan at Bandhavgarh, keen naturalist, is an old hand at  
wildlife tourism in Bandhavgarh)

*“95% of them are there in it for a buck, for ridding themselves of excess money”*  
*“Purely commercial enterprises have no respect for the ecology of the place”*  
Eric D’Cunha, (Manager Wild Chalet Resort, Kanha Kisli, keen wildlifer and has  
been in Kanha since 1987)

Fig 1:

“General category, touching the road LAND IS FOR SALE.  
Contact Devi Yadav 9425855370” at Mocha village, Kanha Kisli



## 1. Introduction

This is a primarily field work based exercise that hopes to understand the (eco – friendly) practices of the tourism industry on the periphery of Bandhavgarh & Kanha Tiger Reserves. While EQUATIONS has gathered data on policy, guidelines, practices of departments (forests, tourism); views of panchayats and local, indigenous peoples, and other organizations as part of a study on Eco Tourism in four states and union territories of the country, this endeavor is to look at the aforementioned aspects vis-à-vis the hard infrastructure and site planning of tourism establishments to complete the picture ecotourism and its impacts.

By nature of the study terrain (namely resorts on the periphery of Kanha & Bandhavgarh), the complexity of criteria and the limitations of time, this research can at best serve as an approach paper that generates a first understanding. It hopefully will serve as a useful piece of work for a more comprehensive study on the same subject in the near future.

### Approach

The approach could be briefly described as: “Explore, understand, ask, listen, observe”

The assignment was finalized at short notice and was to cover fairly large ground. In order to make most of the opportunity it was decided that field work would be qualitative, concentrating on a small sample size of resorts.

The selection of resorts was based on the following criteria

1. Interest that Equations had in certain tourist facilities based on their earlier field work
2. Ease and privilege of access.
3. High end, and claiming to be eco friendly
4. Suggestions of people on field
5. A control site in each location that would represent the other type of tourism in the area was also attempted.

At the same time the author also tried to gain a more general idea of tourism and related infrastructure in the field areas.

### Field work undertaken

#### 1. Bandhavgarh

Surveyed six tourist establishments, from which five have been featured in this study. The insights from the sixth one are part of the overall report. A seventh establishment was visited but cannot be quoted. Undertook one safari in Bandhavgarh.

#### Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve

ESTABLISHMENT 1	Bandhavgarh Wilderness Private Limited/ Mr Dileep Khatau, bandhavgarhwilderness@gmail.com, 07627 265395
INTERVIEWEE	Carl Vorster – Manager
ESTABLISHMENT 2	Kays Camp, Tala village/ Satyendra Tiwari kaysat1@yahoo.co.in, 07627 265309
INTERVIEWEE	Satyendra Tiwari

ESTABLISHMENT 3	Anantvan, Churhat Kothi/ Dhruv Singh moredhruv@yahoo.com , 09425331210
INTERVIEWEE	Dhruv Singh
ESTABLISHMENT 4	Jungle Mantra/ Rhea & Shailin Ramji contact@junglemantra.com, 07627 280547
INTERVIEWEE	Rhea & Shailin Ramji
ESTABLISHMENT 5	Kings Lodge, Village Rancha, District Umaria, Madhya Pradesh <a href="http://www.kingslodge.in/">http://www.kingslodge.in/</a> +91 - 11 - 25885709, 25889516, 42488320
INTERVIEWEE	Yadunath Sen (Naturalist)
ESTABLISHMENT 6	Tree House Hideaway wildlifer@vsnl.net
ESTABLISHMENT 7	Bandhavgarh Safari

## 2. Kanha – Kisli

Surveyed seven establishments, from which three have been featured in this study, three cannot be quoted and one is a control site. Undertook one vernacular architecture study and took the safari. Also undertook an informal survey of village Mocha.

### Kanha Tiger Reserve – Kisli Gate

ESTABLISHMENT 1	Would not like to be quoted
ESTABLISHMENT 2	Wild Chalet Resort iawr@vsnl.com, <a href="http://www.indianadventures.com/wildchalet.htm">www.indianadventures.com/wildchalet.htm</a> , 07649 277203, 9425417407
INTERVIEWEE	Eric D'Cunha – General Manager
ESTABLISHMENT 3	Would not like to be quoted
ESTABLISHMENT 4	Van Vihar – Kanha Kisli (control site)
ESTABLISHMENT 5	Maple/ Baidyanath Group
INTERVIEWEE	Vijay – Manager
ESTABLISHMENT 6	Kipling Camp
INTERVIEWEE	Rishin Basuray – Naturalist
ESTABLISHMENT 7	Would not like to be quoted
ESTABLISHMENT 8	Fence wall construction & house extension
ESTABLISHMENT 9	Village Mocha
ESTABLISHMENT 10	Kanha Safari

## 3. Kanha – Mukki

Surveyed five establishments, from which one was in informal capacity and one is a control site. Undertook one vernacular architecture study and the study of a designed nature trail at the MPTDC premises at Mukki.

ESTABLISHMENT 1	Kanha Jungle Lodge / Amit Sankhala (md) www.tiger-resorts.com , ask@tiger-resorts.com, 011 26853760/ 8656, 07636 290661
INTERVIEWEE	Tarun Bhati - Manager
ESTABLISHMENT 2	Singinawa/ Nanda & Latika Rana www.singinawa.in, rana@singinawa.in, 07636 200031
INTERVIEWEE	Nanda & Latika Rana
ESTABLISHMENT 3	Chitvan/ Shaliendra Tiwari, Sharad Vats, Ashwani Agarwal, Talat, 9893394835
INTERVIEWEE	Ashwani Agarwal – Manager/Partner
ESTABLISHMENT 4	Banjar Tola – Taj CCA – informal visit
ESTABLISHMENT 5	Maikal – control site
ESTABLISHMENT 6	A house being built by Choutan Singh at Sakhrai Tola
ESTABLISHMENT 7	Nature trail at MPTDC premises

## 2. Understanding Tourism in Bandhavgarh & Kanha

Fig 2:

A Tiger requests tourists to enjoy the park

in its total wilderness



## A brief background into Bandhavgarhs' tourism history



Fig 3:  
Bandhavgarh is well connected and visitors coming to Bandhavgarh often also visit Benaras and Khajuraho (map not to scale)

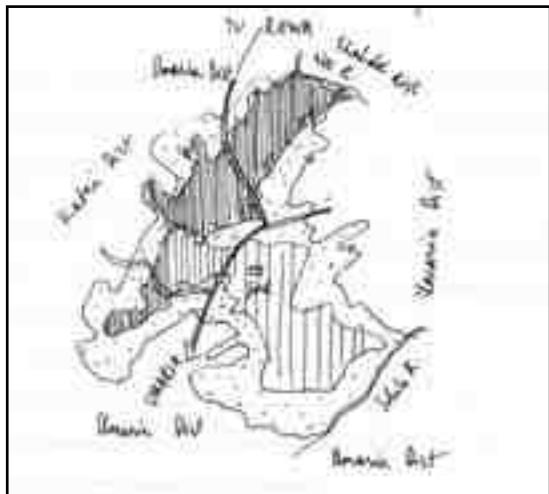


Fig 4:  
Most of the tourist establishments are located around the village of Tala.  
(map not to scale)

There have been three important keys that unlocked the tourism potential of Bandhavgarh and the researcher would think a fourth one is taking shape. (In conversation with Mr Satyendra Tiwari, owner of Skays Camp at Bandhavgarh and well known wildlife photographer)

Bandhavgarh National Park was set up in 1968. The places of interest in Madhya Pradesh were primarily cultural; Khajuraho, Sanchi, Mandu, and wildlife; Kanha, Bandhavgarh. 1975 there were no tourism facilities in remote places in Madhya Pradesh including Mandu, Kanha & Bandhavgarh. Around 1975 the Forest department got involved and two tourist bungalows were built; Log Hut at Kanha Kisli and White Tiger Forest Lodge at Bandhavgarh.

In 1977 the Madhya Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation (MPTDC) was set up. They were inspired by Haryana's example. The MPTDC took over the tourism bungalows and the first phase of tourism in Bandhavgarh started in 1978.

The 2nd phase started in early 90s when a film got made and an article got published in the National Geographic. The story was that of 'Charger' a male tiger that charged vehicles (see <http://www.wildlifeofindia.com/artcharger.htm>). A lot of foreign tourists started coming with 'Charger' as the main attraction. This phase of tourism was centred around a few star tigers and was basically the foreign tourist.

The 3rd phase came with the setting up of Taj CC Africas' Mahua Kothi in 2005. With its daily rate at 800 dollars it created a huge vacuum between the 60 – 100 dollars being charged earlier and the 800 dollars at that Taj CCA. A lot of other establishments came in, hoping to cash-in on the client in between.



Fig 5:

The Tala Gate where at entry time in the morning there could be minor traffic jam with a jostling of vehicles to make an early entry

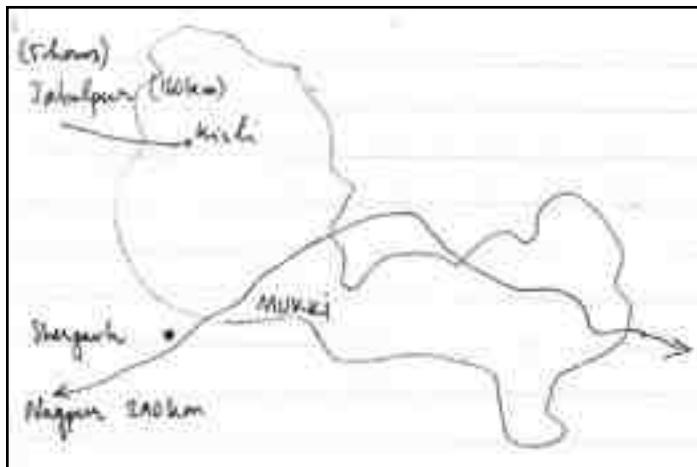
The 4th phase of tourism has started with the opening of a second gate a couple of years back by the forest department for visitor entry. Presently one facility; Anantvan is located at this gate and another under the Samode banner is coming up. It seems to be a matter of time before facilities develop around this gate. (Here it may be useful to note that this second gate was opened by the Forest department as a result of demands by the tourism establishments as larger number of tourist arrivals were creating huge delays at the Tala Gate. However the gate since its opening remains highly under utilized by the tourist establishments. The time taken to travel the few kilometers from Tala (where most lodges are located) to this gate is the justification given by lodge owners for not using it. This gate was set up and is maintained by the Forest Department at a very high cost of infrastructure & manpower. This is a clear case of the lodges acting in sheer self interest and lacking responsibility.)

### The making of a Tiger destination

The toast of the tiger season this year is the Pench Tiger Reserve and the credit to that goes to the film, 'Tigers – Spy in the Jungle' narrated by David Attenborough, a John Downer Production (<http://www.jdp.co.uk/programmes/Tigers:-Spy-in-the-Jungle>)

Using what can be called a mobile spy camera the film unravels the fascinating journey of a tigress and her 10 day old cubs. Shot exclusively in Pench and as David Attenborough puts it, "...the intimate portrait of tigers ever seen...". The film made for BBC and Discovery has already had British tourists streaming into Pench this season. Pench, the new tiger destination was born.

## Kanha



Kanha was declared as a sanctuary in 1933, became a National Park in 1955 and was declared one of the nine original Tiger Reserves under Project Tiger in 1973. Kanha is regarded as the finest locations for seeing tigers in the wild. It is also the only home of the highly endangered 'Hard Ground Barasingha' (*Cervus duvauceli branderi*). This deer species exists nowhere else in the world. Kanha has become the Tiger destination par excellence.

Fig 6:

Kanha is well connected to Nagpur & Jabalpur  
(Map not to scale)

## The changing nature of tourism at Kanha

*“Last five years business has changed. It is changing from wildlife to luxury and leisure”*

Eric D'Cunha

*“What people aspire to and what they really want is different.”*

Dhruv Singh

The tourist facilities at Kanha are organised (may be 'disorganised' is a more suitable word) around the two entry gates, the Kisli gate and the Mukki gate. The majority of the tourist facilities are at the Kisli side though a significant number of large and small players are now establishing themselves at Mukki.

Fig 7:

The Kisli Gate has seen a mushrooming of hotels



Kanha Kisli has roughly 40 hotels with 1000 bed capacity. Kipling Camp is the oldest in Kisli. There are 5 big hotels; Wild Chalet, Krishna, Tuli, Maple, Celebrations. Amongst the large ones Wild Chalet is the oldest followed by Krishna and Tuli. Maple and Celebrations are new. Maple opened in Diwali 2008 and Celebrations is seeing its 3rd season.

### The Indian tourists & Tourism in general

*“...more than 50% are Indian tourist, yet no lodge relies on Indian tourists”*  
- Satyendra Tiwari

An important development in the tourism sector is the increasing number of domestic tourist. It is a relatively recent phenomenon of the past five years. In Kanha a majority of the same come in organised tour groups and from the cities of Pune, Nagpur & Mumbai invariably via Nagpur.

*“...the clients today can be classified in three sets; interested in wildlife, general tourist and not interested at all...”*  
- Eric D'Cunha

One establishment in Bandhavgarh that is no smoking, no drinking, and food is only vegetarian says that no Indian tourist is interested in such a place.



Fig 8:

With the nature of tourism shifting towards luxury and leisure the demands of tourists and facilities provided therefore are shifting towards ACs, swimming pools, spas and now even pool tables & gyms.

### Seasonality in Tourism

Both parks are closed to tourist entry for 4 months of the year during the monsoon, from June to September (the dates differ by 15 days between Kanha & Bandhavgarh) Within the available 8 months a lot of establishments are more or less closed by the middle of April. Virtually no foreign tourists visit during the summer months. Foreign tourists' season lasts from

October to end February / mid March. Domestic tourists visit mainly during vacations related to Diwali, Christmas & New Years and then summer.

The effective full occupancy seems to be roughly 3 months of the year.

All the establishments pack up and wrap up their entire premises at the end of the season and unpack and unwrap post monsoon. This process itself takes about a week each time. The summer and monsoon months are also the time to undertake repairs & maintenance.

The terrorist attacks in Mumbai, coupled with the economic downturn adversely affected foreign tourist arrivals in both Kanha & Bandhavgarh.

### The Chain or webs

Resorts have been (or are being) set up in chains. So often the same group has hotels in other wildlife areas principally in Madhya Pradesh, typically Kanha, Bandhavgarh & now Pench. Or a Nagpur/Raipur based hotel group that has now extended its chain into wildlife areas.

Then there are also resorts set up by builders, transporters that are well established in Raipur & Nagpur and have the money, are well connected. They know the area, have often already done business in it (mostly as part of their main profession) or have come here on holiday and realised that this could be a good investment or even a largish farm house type get away.

### The travel agents & tour operators call the shots

*'If you do a proper eco camp the travel agents are very sceptical.'*

*'Everybody visits but nobody stays.'*

- Dhruv Singh

Wildlife tourism, especially the foreign tourists and the high end Indian tourists is almost completely Travel agent, tour operator based. The clients 1st contact is the Travel Agent. They play the major role in the business and have no idea of what eco tourism is or should be. They have no environmental education or orientation; they only look at the material facilities – ACs, pools, spas, room sizes, internet, TV etc.

Resorts are a service provider, they need to be tuned (and in some cases retuned) for the tour operator and guest.

Fig 9:

Air conditioned rooms are at a premium, putting effective and far more eco-friendly air coolers out of business



At the same time Eric D'Cunha of Wild Chalet is of the opinion that very few Foreign Travel agents have a problem with Air Coolers (instead of Air Conditioners) once they are convinced of the comfort of their guests. It is the resort owners that insist on Air Conditioners as they can charge more for the same.

### This is a Service industry

*'Personalised service + control of accommodation = business'*

- Tarun Bhati, (Manager of the renowned Kanha Jungle Lodge, Kanha Mukki, has been in Kanha for over 20 years)

The key phrase is 'CUSTOMER FRIENDLY'. (one example though not the best one to illustrate this as quoted by a manager was, "A number of establishments are not using CFLs as the white light they emit is not liked by foreign tourists" People who said this did not know that yellow light CFLs have made their entry into the market for the same reasons. This need for being updated is important because the nature of location and the work means that people running the show do not know what the latest developments are.)

In this business the accommodation provider is also taking the guest for the safari twice a day and since all the rest of the time is spent at the resort, the resort is looking after all the needs and entertainment of the guests. *"If we overbook, if we run too much it is very difficult to provide service"* - Tarun Bhati

This means that you need skilled staff that can converse in English along with an entire set of culinary and service skills. Remote locations, non availability of basic goods, difficult road conditions, extreme weather conditions all make this business of service all that more difficult.

### You are as good as your marketing

*'Tourism is a marketing issue and not that of green/ non green. Good Marketing = good clientele, bad marketing = bad clientele'*

- Carl Vooster, Camp Manager, Bandhavgarh Wilderness, with a lot of experience of running wildlife camps in Botswana.

14% of the annual budget of one establishment is for marketing, web sites, agents etc. Resorts have entered into formal partnerships with establishments like Small Luxury Hotel Groups, Welcomgroup and others that in turn mandate certain infrastructure (in case of Small Luxury Hotel Groups it means spas, pools, internet, TV, etc)

In this context (as would be the case in all such establishments across the globe) 'Eco friendly' infrastructure is a question of visibility – how much you can exploit it to earn business is what will decide the investments in the same. Which in turn means that unless the owner has a special interest or passion, the commercial returns on 'Going Green' will determine how green the establishment wishes to go.



Fig 10:

\* Deluxe & Super Deluxe Cottage VIP suite, Jungle Hut, Restaurant, Conference Hall, Swimming Pool, Body Massage, Steam Bath - a rich offering

### An over saturated and fragile market

The carrying capacity of the parks has been established as 65 vehicles for Bandhavgarh and 150 vehicles for Kanha. This roughly translates to 300 – 400 and 700 – 900 guests for Bandhavgarh and Kanha respectively. There have been occasions in Kanha in the recent past where guests who had come all the way could not enter the park. The chances of the number of vehicle entries increasing in the near future are very remote, at the same time the number of facilities go up every season increasing the competition.

Business is not increasing. The economic downturn and security incidents like that in Mumbai have had an adverse affect on the industry this season. The disappearance of tigers from some of the reserves (Sariska, Panna) has led to the disappearance of tourists, this may not be the case in Kanha & Bandhavgarh in the near future but it underlines the fragile nature of Tiger centric tourism.

### Story of a land deal

A builder from Raipur came to a resort for New Years. The whole place, all of Kanha was full and there were a lot of foreigners. The builder asked what the land prices were. As compared to prices in the city, the price of land in Kanha per acre is nothing, some 3 lakhs/acre. The builder got interested and got back in touch. Within 10 days of the New Year he had finalised the deal. He thinks that this is the condition of tourists through out the year. That is what a lot of people who invest money in a place like Kanha feel, they come during some peak season and see that every place is full, so many foreign tourists, rates are high even then everything is full, seems like easy business. But the costs of building a resort here and then running it are very high. (As narrated by the manager of a tourist establishment)

Fig 11: \*Plot is to be sold. For lodge and resort.

Close to Kanha National Park – 17 acres

Touching Birja Air strip – 10 acres. Contact....



## Relationships between Resort owners

"In Bandhavgarh amongst the various tourism establishments there is no fraternity and no animosity."  
 - One resort owner in Bandhavgarh

Both Kanha and Bandhavgarh have a series of old operatives that have been around for a long period of time, since when these areas were completely wild. A significant number (more true of Bandhavgarh than Kanha) are related to or are part of India's royalty and are hence connected in that sense. Bandhavgarh that was a hunting reserve of a royal family still retains a stronghold of royals, the tigerwallahs. However there have been a number of new players in Bandhavgarh in the recent years. There don't seem to be any formal institutions where the resort owners meet other than during meetings with the forest department.

In Kanha at the Kisli Gate there is a Resort Owners and Managers Association that meets regularly to discuss the various problems faced by the industry. There is no such association amongst the operators at the Mukki gate.

## 3. Summary of the Questionnaire results

### General

#### Total Campus area

Land holdings were quite large ranging from 5 acres to 58 acres

#### When built

1979 was the first and a few are on going

#### Architect

- Very few establishments had used the services of an architect.
- The role of the architect was described as that for helping out with the costing.
- Architects are of no use, they can only level the land with bulldozers and then design

#### Facilities

Amongst the establishments visited the tourist densities remained relatively low. On the higher side there were establishments ranging from 20 doubles for an 8 acres site and 34 doubles for a 54 acres site and on the lower side were sites with 12 doubles to a 58 acre site. The same however could not be said about lower end establishments that were coming up at both Bandhavgarh and Kanha.

Fig 12:

A 60 room, 2 storied resort, along with deluxe cottages being built by a local contractor at Bandhavgarh. This sole establishment would have beds equivalent to half a dozen other set ups in the area!



## Related infrastructure

Some establishments, mainly the older ones do not have swimming pools or spas and even resist the same. For example Anantvan, Skays camp at Bandhavgarh & Kipling Camp, Wild Chalet, Jungle Lodges at Kanha.

Small swimming pools described as dipping pools are becoming quite popular. Spas have also started making their appearance. This is also related to the fact that resorts have entered partnerships with establishments like Small Luxury Hotel Groups and others that mandate certain infrastructure (spas, pools, internet, TV, etc)



Fig 13:

Natural settings for pools is a big draw for high end tourists. The water was filled once with rain water from the roof of the main building diverted to the pool. There has been no need to change the water since. The filtration plant of the pool has to run for 4 hours everyday to keep the water clean. This is a major electricity user. Though the owners were keen on natural filtration systems, nothing workable seemed to exist on the market (Singinawa – Mukki – Kanha).

## Perception

### What does 'Going Green' mean

- Here the responses varied but were mostly one or many of the below
- Involving local communities
- Minimising impact on natural resources with a focus on water and electricity
- Minimising impact on land, minimise vegetation damage, regenerate vegetation after construction is complete
- Compact planning versus spread out planning
- Planting lots of trees, developing a garden
- Using Solar energy (alternative energy)
- Developing the resort land as a wildlife heaven
- Reducing waste in the form of plastic
- Cultivating the land organically



Fig 14:

Involving local communities - The premises of Bandhavgarh Wilderness (formerly Camp Mewar) has a small foundation (housed in the room in the photo) that presently provides ambulance services to local villagers



Fig 15 & 16:

A successful approach is encouraging the land to return to wilderness (Singinawa, Wild Chalet, Kipling Camp, Jungle lodge) In this case (Singinawa- above right), all lantana was removed from the roots, wild grasses and lopped trees were encouraged to grow back. Water points for wildlife were created.



Fig 17:

In other sites organic cultivation of land that was farmland before acquisition, located in the immediate vicinity of villages. (Chitwan, Anantvan). In the case of Anantvan (image above) organic farming of land also means employment to local villagers. There is also a possibility of transfer of farming techniques thanks to this; in turn they could be supplying produce to resorts.

### Is there clarity on the same

Over all everybody said, “awareness - yes, clarity – no”

- Guided more by fashion and trends of the day
- The only way to bring clarity is to actually make changes
- People are only exploiting it
- Not possible to judge by tangibles
- Tour operators that have a major role in playing the business have no idea, they only look at the material facilities

### Does it help commercially?

The majority opinion was, “in the long run, yes”

- People will not pay more for a greener establishment, if you can give a greener establishment within the same budget, then people will definitely choose the greener establishment
- It would mean more business
- That is a question of visibility – how much you can exploit it to earn business

### Is it expensive?

The majority opinion was, “initially yes”

- Depends on how green you want to go, it is expensive if you want to go 100% green
- Definitely expensive for small establishments, the same is not the case for larger establishments that spend crores for other things.
- Expenses are the same, it is far more labour intensive
- More in terms of time and energy
- It is like an investment that will give returns in the long term
- All greening activities cost a lot of money for the 1st two years
- What is expensive is more a matter of personal belief and passion
- Yes, but there are a number of non expensive green technologies

### It is time consuming?

The majority opinion was that it takes more time and personal attention

- Even more than going green, staying green is a headache
- Definitely plants and nurseries are more time consuming than camping
- It is time consuming and has to be looked after personally
- Takes time initially

### Is the necessary know how/professional expertise available

The majority response was that the professional expertise is not available

- Handful of professionals have the expertise
- No need for professional expertise
- No expertise is available
- Expertise available, accessible but you have to find them
- The internet is a good source
- Find professionals in bits and pieces; have to run to several agencies. Unified technical knowledge is unavailable

## Would going green without certification be of any help commercially?

Though this question pertained to Green Certification in general, most of the establishments had some form or the other of an affiliation with TOFT- Tour Operators for Tigers ([www.toftigers.org](http://www.toftigers.org)) Hence it would be fair to say that the following opinions are on TOFT.

The opinion was generally positive with number of important reservations. The most positive remark perhaps being that the process of certification involves a lot of learning on what all should be done. However the commercial returns of the same do not seem to be assured, rather it was the marketing skills and capacity in exploiting the certification that mattered. Further suggesting that certain establishments exploited the certification and it served mainly for marketing. Also the suggestion that the TOFT guidelines need to be different for large and small establishments came up, as the budgets and footprints of the two are different.

- Certification without marketing is of no use
- It only helps larger establishments that can use it for marketing. The same criteria for certification cannot be applied for small and large luxury establishments
- Need that stamp, makes a difference. The process of certification involves a lot of learning on what all should be done
- Since not mandatory, it is more a question of interest
- It does help to get clients
- It is a young initiative and is sincere and needs time
- There is an over reliance on the questionnaire. It should be balanced by a TOFT representative observing how the set up functions, verifying in person what is said in the questionnaire.
- Objections were also raised regarding the fact that TOFT accepts resorts wherein they are either in the process of undertaking required action or have assured that will do the needful in the near future.
- TOFT is walking a thin line where they have to assure their credibility of their certification through impartial, transparent and comprehensive assessment of establishments. Once they loose credibility it will be very difficult to regain it.

## Are clients today interested in this aspect?

- Foreign tourists and Indian corporates take it very seriously
- Domestic tourists are less genuine, but more and more are getting aware
- Many people are just not interested

## Site

### How was this site planned?

#### Location based

- Located with respect to opening of a new entry gate
- Forested land close to the gate
- River side location – beautiful views, oriented towards the river
- Came to a village on the fringe of the park that nobody used
- Outside buffer zone, to create a cut off to further development from the town that is likely to become a new district headquarter
- Besides the village.
- Land being progressively bought to create a corridor that connects two forest parts



Fig 18:

Taj Resorts Baanjar Tola near the Mukki gate have large tent like structures at the rivers edge with the core zone of Kanha National Park on the opposite bank. A local villager was of the opinion that since their river based activities (bathing, washing, getting buffaloes etc) will disturb the whites that will stay in these tents they will not be able to use the river as they used to.



Fig 19:

Maple (under Baidyanath Group) has been built on farmland along Banjar River close to Kanha Kisli. They pump water from the river to fill a water body that they have created on site. The river levels have been low due to failed monsoons the past two years, local communities depend on the Banjar for their daily needs. The pumping not only further reduces the water but also pollutes the river as can be seen in the image above.



Fig 20:  
Jungle Mantra at village Rancha in Bandhavgarh  
wants to progressively buy land to create a  
wildlife corridor connecting forested hills

Fig 21:

Anantvan has located itself at the second gate opened by the forest department as an attempt to establish itself in a new zone. Also one of the main motives was engaging with the local village



Fig 22:

Skays camp with a relatively small site within the village of Tala has been built over a period of time



### Evolution based

- Slowly built up over a period of time
- Started as a place for family and friends

### Availability based

- Barren land, plan based on what was there in other resorts
- Affordable land available at distance from main tourism development

### Layout planning

- Spread out, each a private jungle, privacy, exclusivity
- Compact planning, site 11 acres, development of 1 acre



**Fig 23:**  
Bandhavgarh Wilderness (ex Camp Mewar) has a spread out layout with a private jungle for each cottage, in isolation of the other. This layout is expensive to run because of the distance to be covered by all services; pipes, electricity, roads.

**Fig 24:**

Jungle Lodge at Kanha - Mukki has developed all its infrastructure in 1 acre of its 11 acres



## Site management during construction

- Managing labour on site a big problem
- Engage local labour that do not stay on site reducing site management problems
- Based on already built resort, replanning of existing resort
- Construction rubble was used for filling up gully affected by erosion

## Any ecological site planning

- Detailed site survey with all trees marked on it, and the other features like ponds, mounds etc
- Studying the natural drainage of the site
- Reusing existing infrastructure to the maximum
- Minimum damage to land and vegetation
- Cottages, pathways organised around trees
- Studied the wildlife corridors on site
- Compact planning concentrated in one part of site, leaving the rest wild
- Tapped into existing stream to make a small lake on site
- Exploited the agricultural nature of land to cultivate organically
- Ecological planning cannot be done without the local communities involvement in the project
- Property has no fence
- Property has barbed wire fence allowing free wildlife movement, but restricting cattle



Fig 25:  
In Kipling  
Camp the  
cottages,  
pathways are  
organised  
around trees.



Fig 26 & 27:

No fence encloses Wild Chalet. A ditch along its boundary, along with the efforts of staff keeps cattle at bay. Wild Chalet is located along a bank of Banjar river and wildlife approaching the river for a drink pass through it.



**Fig 28:**  
In Singinawa the natural drain was exploited to create a large water body that today attracts not only various herbivores but also leopards

The fence that demarcates Singinawa from the buffer zone is in barbed wire, allowing wildlife movement but keeping out cattle

#### **Any site specific features that are beneficial to you and/or wildlife**

- Existing water body enlarged
- Enhancing, repairing traditional tank
- Enhancing marshy area
- Created a water body that helps recharge our well and provides water for gardening
- Cultivate part of land organically (specially greens)
- Vegetable garden along with fruit trees
- Nursery of forest trees of Central India with 3500 saplings of 98 species, some on the verge of disappearance
- Planted 3000 bamboos, planting other plants too
- Planted fruit trees that attract wildlife
- Tree and plant species that attract deer and langurs
- Working with soils to enrich them, which in turn means better grasses for wild boar and Cheetal
- Grasses are burnt in some parts to encourage the growth of nutritious shoots that attract deer
- Wall was built to prevent thefts, small holes in it for wildlife
- Dull lighting at night
- Low lights



**Fig 29:**  
Jungle Mantra is enhancing the capacity of the traditional tank on their premises. Jungle Mantra says that villagers continue to access the tank. There is a risk to acquisition of vital community resources like tanks, wherein local communities may end up having no access or highly limited access to them, increasing the precarity of their condition and this in turn having a negative impact on the forests.



Fig 30:

Anantvan has established a nursery of 3500 saplings of 98 species of indigenous central Indian trees. Some of which are on the verge of disappearance in their former ranges. Projects like this can play a vital role in the revival of forests.

## Vegetation

Not everybody seemed to differentiate vegetation qualitatively. There were 3 main approaches.

1. A 'Garden' approach – exotics, ornamental, lawns, pathways, levels, etc – often water intensive.
2. A organic farm approach – greens, vegetables, fruits, composting, local village labour, farming of land, fairly water intensive
3. Going wild – local species, minimum disturbance, ecological restoration, wildlife centric, minimal hard paving.

In most cases there were some or the other of at least two of the three types.

- Exotic ornamental garden type plants, Lawns need watering and maintenance
- Maximum local vegetation to be retained, planted
- All fallen leaves are supposed to be left as they are, however labourers continue to clear probably due to fear of losing employment & out of habit
- Setting up nursery for re-greening of this site but also our other resorts
- Naturalists and staff keep a check on cattle
- Took Sal saplings from the forest and replanted – have grown into mature trees.
- Prefer re-growth of natural vegetation rather than planting trees. Trees on land would also mean restrictions on where to build in the future
- Owner brings truck loads of saplings from Andhra and whole family plants
- Natural vegetation, tall grasses, wild vegetation
- Planted lemon grass
- 58 acres of lantana uprooted by 40 people over a period of 3 months
- No fertilisers and pesticides used
- All trees that were lopped off were trimmed to leave one stem that has now grown into trees
- Herbal garden



Fig 31:  
Some premises follow a 'Resort Garden, approach with lawns, exotics and ornamentals. Very water intensive, not very wildlife friendly - looks lush and green but is not green



Fig 32:  
In Singinawa 58 acres of lantana was uprooted by 40 people over a period of 3 months. The fence that demarcates Singinawa from the buffer zone is in barbed wire, allowing wildlife movement but keeping out cattle.

Fig 33:  
In Bandhavgarh Wilderness since its take over from Camp Mewar the new management wants that all fallen leaves are left as they are. However labourers continue to clear probably due to fear of losing employment & out of habit



## Water

### Is water a problem?

Water was a problem but not of significant proportions at least to the resort owners, all have their own assured sources; open wells, bore wells. There were discussions of drop in ground water tables, but the chances that resort extraction is the only reason for the same is unlikely to hold. Instead in all villages both; more open wells and borewells will help with irrigated farming and fulfilling the water needs of the villagers and should be explored as a positive action taken by resorts. Agriculture has been mainly rain fed and is badly affected by wild animal raids. The ground water levels are high (due to the geology in the case of Bandhavgarh) and open wells and bore wells will help sustaining agriculture, allow multi cropping, more cash generating crops and larger yields.

- Should suffice
- Not a problem
- People have no idea of how much effort and energy goes into providing them water in a tap.
- Water is the main concern
- Enormous quantity of water is being consumed, water level has been going down
- Water has high fluoride content, high iron content – no water testing (Bandhavgarh)
- Kanha has had 2 back to back failed monsoons, the river has never been this low
- Tough time March – May
- Water level going down due to excessive extraction by resorts, wells drying up in summer

### How do you manage water?

- Borewell
- Dug well
- Both borewell and dug well
- Pumps and overhead tanks
- Water supplied by pressure pump

### Have you undertaken any water saving/ optimising initiatives?

The main actions undertaken could be listed as using grey water for gardening and putting a note in bathrooms regarding linen washing.

- Only showers, no bath tubs
- All shower fittings are water saving with aeration for pressure
- Note to clients on linen reuse
- Note to clients on water saving measures
- Grey water goes straight to plants
- Want to do a sand gravel charcoal underground filter
- 1 litre bottles given on demand
- Site water is very good, served in the dining hall
- Give boiled and filtered water to guests for drinking
- Not going for any carpet grass (lawns) or gardens to save water
- Use mainly tissue paper in toilets
- Earlier the camp was paddy fields, have retained their walls which in turn help retain and recharge water
- Left dug pits where rain water collects and recharges
- Roof rain water recharges 4 borewells

- First season roof top rain water was canalised to fill the swimming pool
- 2 flush systems
- Water on site is tested, is very good is drunk by our guests

Fig 34:

Anantvan encourages guests to use the handpump, it helps them realise how resource intensive it is to supply water.



Fig 36:

A water saving shower fitting at Singinawa

Fig 35:

Jungle Lodge has created a small tank that takes the water overflow from the overhead tank. This in turn is used to water plants.



Fig 37:

Kipling Camp encourages guests to fill water from the aquaguard installed in the eating area rather than depend on bottled water.

Fig 38:

A striking note in the bathroom at Kipling Camp explains how wasteful one can get



More could be done specially in selection of water saving plumbing fittings. Since land is plentiful systems to recycle grey water and sewage should be implemented. Sites with extensive gardens or organic farming should explore drip irrigation as efficient, water saving irrigation technique.

### How do you manage the linen washing?

There was an understanding, though not amongst all the resorts that detergents are harmful to water. The fact that nothing is available in the market in the form of eco-friendly detergents did not help the issue much.

- One establishment tries to wash on campus.
- The linen is normally washed in the local river.
- Know that it is a problem but it also generates local employment
- If eco friendly / less harmful detergents were available in the market would use them definitely
- A note encourages guests to put the linen for washing only if they really have to



Fig 39:

"Kipling Camp Fresh Towels... We use large quantities of detergents and hundreds of gallons of water to wash towels that have only been used once. Please decide for yourself Please leave towels in the towel Should you would like to use them more than once"



Fig 40 & 41:

Almost all linen goes for washing with detergents in the local rivers in Kanha & Bandhavgarh. It also generates local employment. Seen here are washermen on the Banjaar river at Kanha Kisli and linen drying outside a house in Mocha village.



Fig 42:

The writing on the wall: "If your child falls sick repeatedly then only give him boiled water that has been cooled to drink." Interestingly, though the village of Banjar Tola close to the Mukki gate does not have any electricity everything around it; the road, the mobile tower, the resorts have electricity supply.

## Energy

Interestingly, though the village of Banjar Tola (above) close to the Mukki gate does not have any electricity everything around it; the road, the mobile tower, the resorts have electricity supply.

### What is your main source of electricity?

Except Mukki gate which is in Balaghat district, both Bandhavgarh and Kanha Kisli have fairly good supply. For everybody (except two establishments) the main source of electricity is the state grid through a transformer (16 KVA to 150 KVA with high tension cables) with essential generator back up. Establishments pay fixed monthly rates for the installed transformer capacity and commercial rates for each unit of power consumed making the costs of energy from the state grid high. However despite this the resorts would like the State to provide more electricity for which they are ready to pay an even higher price. The reason for this being that the cost of generator based power is double that of the commercial rates and the electricity demand is only increasing.



Fig 43:

For Chitvan at Kanha - Mukki like most other resorts the main source of electricity is the state grid through a transformers of capacities varying from a low 16 KVA to a high 150 KVA that needs high tension cables. A generator back up is essential, even more so with air conditioning demands.

## Is state supply reliable?

In Bandhavgarh & Kanha Kisli the power supply is reliable, there are fixed timings in the morning (that coincide with the period of the day that tourists are out on safari) when there is a power cut. Kanha Kisli has been declared under the Tourism zone and power supply has improved. However in Kanha Mukki which is in Balaghat district the power supply is fairly unreliable with long hours of power cuts during the day.

## What is the generator back up you have?

The large capacity of generators has to do with ACs and filtration plants for swimming pools. Since most establishments rely on biomass based water heaters that component of high electricity use is taken care of. There is either one extreme where the establishment relies almost completely on the main grid or the other than they have capacities that can light up a small town.

- Will have to take a 100 KVA generator back up only due to the load of the ACs
- Invertors
- Invertors and batteries
- Presently 40 KVA, a second one is to come.
- 100 KVA silent generator
- Back up genset of 7.5 KVA – do not use it in the night. Provide hurricane lamps with candle and match box
- 3 phase generator, no sound pollution, no smoke
- Diesel genset
- No Generator
- 225 KVA silent generator
- 63 KVA silent generator

Fig 44:

All new establishments have larger capacity silent generators. Generator being installed at Chitvan, Kanha Mukki.



Fig 45:

Skays camp relies completely on the mainline connection and batteries. The battery runs the place till they get discharged irrespective of whether the electricity is back or not

## What are your energy costs?

- Energy costs will be high
- Low
- The summer and winter is very severe here. Costs are high due to heating in winters and cooling needs in summer

- Energy use is high in hotter months when the ACs are running
- Mainly electricity is needed to run the ACs, the swimming pool filtration plant runs for 3 hours daily, then there is heating and the lights
- Energy is very expensive. Can reduce costs by saving.
- Pay commercial rates

### Have you taken any steps to economise/optimise energy use

The main approach is that of augmenting supply rather than economising.

Main energy consumption is the ACs, the filtration plant, heating (mainly water but also in room heaters in winter), then there is the pump for water, lights and other cooling devices like fans & coolers.

Penny wise but hardly pound wise would be a fairly precise summation of energy savings. Most establishments approach towards optimising energy is of economising the lighting leaving aside the air conditioning.

### Lighting

- Power saving bulbs everywhere, tube lights in certain areas. In the long run it is very economical.
- When guests leave the room we shut off the lights
- 40 watt bulbs in Kitchen and office – changing to CFLs. Guests prefer bulbs, dislike CFLs white light
- Using small bulbs – 25 watts. Foreigners do not like the white light of CFLs (the interviewee did not know that yellow light CFLs are now available in the market and was interested in testing the same)
- Changing to CFLs on an experimental basis. There are power fluctuations which lead to bulbs going off. CFLs are too expensive for that. Installing a mainline power surge protector for that.
- 100% energy saving CFLs, bigger windows. Solar powered outdoor lighting
- CFLs wherever possible. When guests leave all rooms are checked and lights put off.
- Outdoor lights is a big problem – they disturb wildlife
- When guests are not here we run on minimum lights. Street lights are switched off
- Invertors that are used from 8 am to 5pm to assure that the batteries are completely discharged. Then 5pm onwards back to the main supply



Fig 46:  
Jungle lodge has inserted skylights in the verandah and toilets completely eliminating need for light during the day in these spaces.



Fig 47:  
CFLs are being used widely.



Fig 48:

Kipling Camp and some other establishments continue to use lamps as foreign guests are not comfortable with the white lights of CFLs. On knowing that CFLs with yellow lights are now easily available in the market the establishments were interested in using them.

### Heating water, heating

- Cowdung cakes used for boiler firing and for camp fire
- Presently using purely solar heated water. Will be putting in place a hybrid of solar and electricity
- Solar water heaters on a trial basis, but they do not work very well in the winters when we have guests and they take an early bath before they head out on the Forest safari.
- Earlier there were electric geysers everywhere, now we have changed to biomass based boilers. Makes a huge difference in power consumption. Firewood and all rubbish is burnt in there.
- Hot water bottles for sleeping specially as winters can be quite severe.
- Boilers for heating water.
- Have 6 heaters, when guests want them we provide the same.
- No need for heaters, the construction in stone, well insulated
- Biomass boilers – used mainly in winter months. Wood is from Forest department, the adivasis also sell.
- Brought Australian solar water heaters 20 years back. Did not work – shade, moist, fog in Kanha. 10 years back they were shifted to Bandhavgarh. They work well there.
- Heating water is all boilers either biomass or gas based water heaters.



Fig 49:

Kipling shifted to biomass boilers (known as Gujarat Boilers) that have resulted in savings on electricity consumption. They burn waste along with dead wood. Since biomass is plentiful this is a good option to electric geysers



Fig 50:

Bandhavgarh Wilderness (ex Camp Mewar) has solar water heaters; however their performance has not been satisfactory in other establishments.



**Fig 51:**  
Electric geysers at Maple,  
big electricity consumers



**Fig 52:**  
The classic hot water bottles are used for  
a cold night, keeping heater use down

## Cooling

- Special roofing, roofs higher to allow more natural air cooling
- External walls have 11 inch stone on outside, 3 inch gap and then brick lined on the inside. These are highly heat and sound insulating. The 382 sq ft cottage is easily cooled by 1,5 tonne AC
- No ACs, pool, generator
- Air Coolers in most rooms. They work better than ACs in summer as it is very dry here.
- Low wattage ACs that use less than 1 KVA
- Dining area and the common spaces like reception, lobby rely on natural air circulation.
- Only 2 ACs but sceptical about how effective they are. Desert coolers are better in peak summer. Earlier the coolers were inside the room, now we have window mounted air coolers – very effective. Very few foreign travel agents have a problem with this. The truth is ACs make money, tourists can be charged more for an AC room and they are ready to pay!
- 1 AC and the rest have Air Coolers or fans
- Dining hall has a large Air Cooler
- Use fans – very comfortable, we are in a sal forest very cool.
- Coolers and ACs are 50 – 50, There is more demand for AC rooms
- AC accommodation is in high demand. Presently we are managing with a 16 KVA connection, if

we put ACs we will need a 64 KVA connection – we will have to pay for the connection for the entire year though 64 KVA will be used for just 2/3 months of the year, plus we will have to keep a 64 generator back up. Becomes extremely expensive

- Put off ACs in November
- Summer season demands are very tough. Need electricity 24 hours, need generator back up, ACs, Coolers makes expenses very high
- Used a Australian company Breeze Air's evaporative cooling based air coolers for the dining, kitchen space



Fig 53 & 54:

Maple has tent structures exposed to the direct sun. It is significantly hotter inside than outside. To cool it they have very high capacity ACs, making it a complete energy disaster.



Fig 55:

Wall mounted air coolers, easily the most effective cooling devices are being abandoned because the market demands for ACs. Air coolers have been shifted from the interiors to be wall mounted at Wild Chalet. This is very effective.



Fig 56:

At Singinawa a thick wall with an air gap on the inside insulates the interior from the heat reducing AC needs such that a larger area can be cooled using the same capacity AC



Fig 57 & 58:

Filler slab construction along with being shaded by trees makes the rooms at Jungle Lodge cool, not needing even an Air Cooler. Even in places which continue to use ACs such measures will reduce the load on the ACs and hence save power.

### Other measures

- Use hand pump when possible.
- Energy saving features are an important criteria now when buying new equipment.
- Switch based key system for rooms
- LPG cooking and for campfires and barbecue firewood is used.
- Central switch in cottages
- Couple of places were using box solar cookers

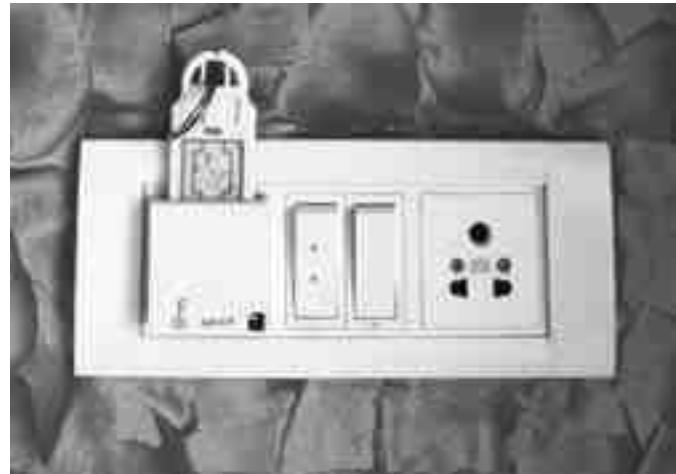


Fig 59 & 60:

In Maple, energy intensive air conditioner, mini fridge, electric geyser share space with a room switch that puts off the entire room when the guest leaves with the key..

## Any renewable energy options – Is it practical?

Though everybody spoke of how it was important to 'Go Solar' as part of Going Green, just four establishments have tried something. In any case costs and technology will make any intervention using solar a bit superficial

- How much solar power can you use – it is cosmetic. It has to be cost effective to work.
- Initial expense for solar power is too high.
- External lighting is solar. Langurs get attracted to panels. Trees also cause shade.
- 15 -16 solar charged street lights. Problem with the handling. Staff are not careful, the expensive items get damaged.
- Took part from the 9 – 11 January in the Solar Energy Fair at Pragati maidan in Delhi. Cost for going completely solar will come to 15 – 20 lakhs. Should be able to bring it down to 5 lakhs hopefully. 1 pathway light to be placed at 15 – 18 feet costs 3600, 1 Street light to be placed at 50 – 60 feet costs 16000 – 18500
- Want to try a combination of solar + LEDs, but not available
- Solar powered outdoor lighting system
- Solar powered lanterns
- Tried biogas – did not work. Area is moist; it does not work in such an area, it seeped into the ground.

Fig 61 & 62:

Anantvan uses solar cookers with great efficiency, also chargeable solar lanterns



Fig 63 & 64:

Skays camp uses box solar cookers. These path way solar lamps that have LEDs hence requiring a very small charge.



## Waste

*'The main problem is that people do not want to deal with it'*

- Dhruv Singh



Fig 65 & 66:

A neat segregation of all dry waste at Anantvan, part of which is burnt and rest goes for recycling

### What is the kind of waste generated?

- The nature of waste has changed completely. 15 years back you did not have cold drinks in plastic bottles and tin cans.
- Main waste is plastic bottles and tetra packs
- Mineral water bottles – biggest problem, packaging plastic – cheese, butter, marmalade, jams, sauce etc, milk tetra packs polythene, food waste, kitchen waste
- You find 1000s of Gutka packets everywhere now.

### What is the main problem with waste?

- Kitchen waste was a big problem. Adopted a South African system. Colour coded bins. For glass and tin disposal there are no recycling centres. A man from Manpur comes and collects the glass and tin.
- Plastic bottles and Tetra Packs are the problem
- All the bottles, packaging plastic is a huge headache
- Plastic is the main problem with waste
- Plastic bottles are so large in number and volume that they soon fill up what ever space may have been created for them.

## How do you manage your waste?

*“TRAINING is very important”*

Carl Vooster

Almost everybody talks of segregation, composting and recycling. The system followed is that of digging large pits, some of which are simply filled up with waste and then shut and new pits are started. Not everybody was doing composting, nor was everybody really segregating, nor was recycling happening big scale. It was clear that the level of interest in the same of each owner / manager was an important factor. However the level of recycling can easily be augmented.

Specially in Kanha Kisli easy availability of food from resort kitchens has led to a proliferation of stray dogs. There have been incidents of stray dogs attacking deer.

- Organic waste goes into the garden
- Organic waste is composted
- Waste is systematically segregated, some of it is burnt, most of it goes for recycling. Somebody comes and collects the waste.
- Designated bins for different wastes. A kabadiwallah from Umaria comes to collect.
- All organic waste is put in pits. Sacks are filled with plastic bottles and tetra packs. Kabadiwallah from Manpur collects the tin and oil cans. Waste is burnt in a while. Keep checking that separation of waste is being properly done. Going smoothly.
- Food waste gets eaten by animals. Aata, bread crumbs, rice is fed to the fish in the tank. Separate bins are strictly followed. A dump for plastic, tins, paper. All the waste goes in the same pit including organic waste from the kitchen. Plastic bottles etc are burnt. A large pit is made and then closed, another pit is opened. No recycling. At the level of Kisli may be recycling can be done, we wanted an incinerator but for that different permissions are needed
- Tins, bottles send to Mandla. Once a month somebody comes down to collect – money that is earned goes to staff kitty
- Kitchen waste goes into a composting pit where wild boar come in the night
- Bottles both glass and plastic people come and collect
- Tanks for segregation of different wastes
- Organic composting attracts wild animals so we burn it and bury it
- Bottles, plastic, glass, tin cans other junk (all that can be recycled) is collected by a kabaddiwallah
- Waste is also burnt in the boilers for heating water
- Burn off the plastic – used to burn it in the boilers
- Person from Mocha collects the tin, glass, plastic bottles
- Kitchen waste eaten by langurs and cattle and by wild boar in the night.
- Use cloth bags for buying rations from the market
- Reduced packaging right from our suppliers
- Give out lunch boxes that are returned and all other such collateral that turns into garbage after 1 use has been minimised
- Garbage is segregated - Tied up with a man from Balaghat that comes to collect



Fig 67:

Maple as is the case with some other establishments has an open pit for all waste that is a heaven for stray dog proliferation.



**Fig 68 & 69:**  
Bandhavgarh Wilderness (ex Camp Mewar) & Jungle Lodge have enclosed their pits thus keeping the stray dog menace away.



**Fig 70 & 71:**  
Organic composting at Anantvan and Chitvan.  
Manure prepared goes into farming work



### How do you manage your waste water?

Septic tanks and use of grey water for watering the plants seemed to be the two ways in which waste water was managed. One place had a sewage treatment plant.

- Sewage collected in Septic tanks. Grey water is collected at 2 points and passed through an underground sand filter followed by a charcoal filter each measuring 2.5 x 2.5 x 2m and then released into the ground
- Each lodge has 5-10 acres. Marsh land treats water naturally.
- Kitchen waste water goes into a tank – like a septic tank, there are worms in the 2nd tank, and third sand tank that the water passes through. The smell problem has been solved. The tank is cleaned every year, gets washed away in the rains.
- STP plant, water goes for gardening
- Sewage and grey water goes to the septic tank – no recycling done.
- Sewage goes to the septic tank and grey water goes into a 2 feet x 2 feet hole and is left into the ground. Kitchen water goes to a 10 feet x 10 feet hole and is then released in the nullah
- Grey water goes to plants directly. Sewage goes to septic tanks
- Decomposed sewage we ultimately use as manure



Fig 72:  
Maple has installed a sewage treatment plant that runs on electricity.

Fig 73:  
Camp Mewar has a series of tanks with sand gravel filters where the water passes before being let off into a water body



Fig 74 & 75:  
Grey water from bathrooms and basins is led off directly into the plants at Chitvan  
At Skays camp the fruit trees are watered in a similar way.

## Would you be interested in implementing solutions?

- Will be re-doing the filters for the waste water treatment.
- Yes would definitely be interested in implementing solutions. The key word is that whatever we do has to be CUSTOMER FRIENDLY
- Would be interested in exploring the possibilities of Rain Water harvesting

## Client Interface

Because of the nature of the business there is a large scope of client interface. The time spent with the resort naturalist is part of the business and the quality of naturalists and the activities the resorts undertake with tourists in the wild vary. However this question pertains more to the client interface through camp based activities, brochures, library, posters, other such educational platforms. The establishments with a greater client interface are also invariably the more eco friendly ones. Unfortunately most establishments have restricted their client interface to the bare minimum for doing business.

- Camp information booklet : What we stand for
- Information on water, waste treatment, heating/cooling etc
- People have passion but not exposed to the green thing. There is a need for education.
- No 'Take Back Home' material or education planned for.
- No in-campus trail
- Functions like a home stay. Client is invited to take part in various activities including those in kitchen, organic farming, nursery.
- When the floors and walls are redone, which is on a regular basis the guests are exposed to an integral slice of Indian village life
- Have a briefing when guests arrive.
- Educate guests about the entire concept, seek their support.
- Tell them that we need to run the show for their children. Educate tourists about wastage this has an impact.
- Conduct guided nature trails in the forest, visit tribal village, identify trees, plants, bird watching
- Ask guests if they would like local food specialities
- Clients are taken on the back of elephant Tara to the nearby tribal village
- Trails on campus and to the nearby river
- Displays on Kanha, wildlife, wildlife sightings
- Small shop for souvenirs, books
- Use campfire to talk about the fact that we grow our own wood
- Bicycles for visitors
- Bullock cart ride into the village – house visit, animals, lifestyle – as an experiential visit.
- Organise Tribal Baiga dance for visitors
- Wildlife film screenings in the dining hall have over 40 National Geographic films.
- A small hall with projection facilities where we have screening of films, talks by our naturalist.



Fig 76 & 77:

At Anantvan & Wild Chalet walls have been effectively used to talk about wildlife



Fig 78 & 79:

At Jungle Lodge there is a more interactive space where sightings can be noted. Various plants also have identification boards.

## Local

The importance of generating local livelihoods is perhaps the one with the strongest potential of helping the conservation cause. 'Going Local' is definitely 'Going Green'. Though this study was not looking at this aspect, it invariably came up. Everybody claims to be going local in a big way, however the minimum wages, working hours, provident fund for workers, quality of living quarters etc all deserve a separate study in itself.

**The story of Banjar Tola:** The village of Banjar Tola is located close to the Mukki gate and along the river Banjar, making their lands prime tourist property. The village sold large chunks of land and as outsiders bought large pieces of land (also from other sources in the vicinity) along the Banjar river, the villages' access to the river is reduced to more or less one point.



Fig 80:

The access to the Banjar river for the people of Banjar Tola is likely to be reduced to a portion just next to the bridge.



**Fig 81:**  
**Backlanes of Mocha are strewn with plastic.**

**The story of village Mocha:** There has been a sudden demand for land. Prices have gone through the roof. Money has led to material comforts but no improvement in health facilities, education, no toilet facilities. Everybody now has TVs, VCRs, Dish TV, people are also watching pornography now. All this is ruining the fabric of the society here. The liquor shop has locals there at 11 am. After sale of land or due to earnings in the tourism trade locals have bought Gypsies. Now there are more vehicles than can enter the park. The Gypsy being a petrol vehicle it is uneconomical to use for other transport related work. So a lot of gypsies are lying unused.

- NGO registered in Nov 2008. Adopted the village school. Have volunteers coming primarily from England but also other countries to teach at the school and undertake other activities.
- In 2nd half of January 2009 a medical camp is being organised with a doctor from New York, one from Manipur and medical students from Jabalpur.
- More than 60% of the staff are local
- Locals that worked as labourers on the site have been hired as staff. Their sense of ownership is very high
- Planning to buy land across the road and give it to locals for the cultivation of vegetables and greens and a pond for fish
- Presently buy vegetables and greens and milk from the locals
- Adopted local school
- Adopted and rehabilitated a 8 acre wetland in the village of Kohka where we go with guests for birdwatching. Villagers continue to use the resource.
- Hired local women for work – they are very sincere workers
- All have undergone hands on training
- Organised English classes
- Loans from the owners
- Initially a big problem of bunking
- It is good to have some staff from the outside initially
- Takes some time to change mindset of the locals
- They are very good with the land and can do almost everything.
- Basic facilities for all staff – you look after the people well and they do the same
- Name tags, staff of the month competitions
- 01 May - 15 September staff get off, they continue their farm work

- Selection & promotions based completely on meritocracy
- Patels and Choudharys are scheduled tribes (based on what the interviewee told the researcher, no further verification was done) that quit the forest and settled down some 60 years ago. Baiga and Gond remain forest tribes. Help Baiga to sell their products made from bamboo
- Offer alternative livelihood to people that were dependant on the forests via employment on premises or through involvement in supplies to Chitvan and involvement in various livelihood trainings / activities
- Conducted training in handloom weaving, called trainer from Chhattisgarh.  
This is a silk area, there is a couple that is teaching village women. We buy their products  
Since brick was needed for construction got the locals to set up brick kiln on site itself
- The advantage to local labour of this tourism is its seasonal nature. During the months that they need to work on their farms and their field which is basically the summers and the rains they are free, plus they have the cushion of the job that continues to pay them and to which they are going to return the following season

## Management, Training & Systems

*'More than going green it is STAYING green that is difficult'*

*'Systems and training is very important. Nothing is possible without that.'*  
*'For both the Eco and Camp part to work training in both is the biggest thing.'*  
*'Locals here have not seen a bathroom. The sense of a new environment it takes 2 years to get over the shock and understand.'*

- Dhruv Singh

This troika; "Management, Systems and Training" that may sound like management jargon are highly under estimated, misunderstood, under rated aspects of Going Green. Virtually nothing can be achieved without these in place. In any case the chance of the establishment sustaining a Green technology/initiative is most likely to fail if these are not in place.

- Regular maintenance protocol
- Basically tell staff about invertors and how the battery water has to be filled up regularly
- People Management is very important. Hired all local staff. Sceptical of handouts. Open door policy let them come to you any time for anything.
- Devendar the master carpenter – has been here for 7 years. Every year trains four locals in carpentry.
- Training and Management is most important. This also helps to take this back to the community
- Periodic in-house training for staff. Staff has been there since 87 so they know everything.
- Who manages the show is very important.
- The hoteliers have set up an Association in Kanha, meet with the Park Director
- Picnic on site is allowed in one location
- Dining area has displays on wildlife, Kanha.
- Books are available to guests
- Very good establishments without the right management do not do well. For example Kipling is a very good establishment but today it needs a good management. (person who said this would this not like to be quoted)

## Legislation

Good will, passion, voluntary certification, education, awareness can only take you to a certain distance. At the end of the day Legislation will be needed if we have to see a change in the way resorts are run.

*“Forest department has no say by law on the eco lodges. The panchayat is the do and end for all legislation.”* - Dhruv Singh

Government rules and regulations are definitely needed. Presently establishments pay luxury and sales tax.

The Botswana case: In Botswana the land is leased. Everything is built in wood and on stilts. The footprint is minimal. Inspection is carried out every 2 years. When the lease expires the buildings are removed and the wilderness takes over.

- There is no auditing and no regulation. People are entering the forest with huge vehicles. Land use diversions were banned last year. No carrying capacity studies been carried out. In South Africa this is done and the tourist infrastructure is limited. We should have some kind of control saying that no more lodges can come up. Of course there is a problem where in I have already set up and am saying this. But legislation is required. There should also be a classification based on type of set up, for example a tented camp cannot be subject to the same rules as resorts with big constructions.
- Legislation will help. Where ever park authorities feel that there is interference to the well being of the park they should intervene.
- Maple has mast light, these cause light pollution, you can see the reflection of the same in the river, they disturb nocturnal animals.
- One resort had a DJ for New Years, (Celebrations at Kanha). Park authorities intervened and fined the establishment.
- Park has imposed restrictions. 150 vehicles, there are 3 entry gates. There were people this year that could not get entry (Kanha)
- There is no regulatory authority, no code of architecture.
- Minimum and sensible use of natural resources mandatory
- Eco friendly, Eco development concepts should be given priority.
- Forest department should not give entry to certain premises that do not follow the laid down guidelines (like in Ranthambore - needs to be verified)

## Other points of interest

- No use of chemical pesticides, rat poison on campus as it could adversely affect wildlife.
- Need to create awareness amongst local people on anti – poaching and sustainable use of resources.
- Tiger sighting is not wilderness
- Outskirts of the protected areas that have no formal protection will be finished
- Earlier because of mists the forest would be dipping till the 31st of March now that is over in February itself.
- Air Conditioners is a problem not of heat but that of mentality

## 4. In Conclusion

The main issues with respect to the 'Going Green' of the tourism sector located on the fringes of Kanha & Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserves in order of priority are as follows

### 1. Local Communities



Fig 82:  
Girls at Banjar Tola,  
Mukki Gate, Kanha



Fig 83:  
A family building itself  
a home at Sarkhai  
Tola, close to Mukki  
Gate, Kanha

Local communities have to date borne the brunt of the creation of Protected Areas. Often poor communities, with small land holdings, relying almost solely on rainfed agriculture they incur significant losses of agricultural produce to wildlife. These losses have increased as establishment of protected areas led to increase in wildlife populations and also villagers can take virtually no action against the wild animals as that would incur the wrath of the forest department. To that add; restricted access to the forest, harassment from the forest department, isolation of location, limited employment options and very little choice for livelihood other than the forest. Also as the case of both Mocha and Banjar demonstrate the benefits gained from selling land to the tourist industry quickly dry up. The livelihood opportunities and other development opportunities that the tourism industry can provide to local communities seem to be their most important possible contribution to the protection of wildlife habitats. Local communities have very good skills with the forest and have a large stake in the protection of forests and the species contained within. By their direct or indirect benefit from the tourism business their stakes in protecting their source of livelihood; the protected areas become high. However the minimum wages, number of working hours, provident fund for workers, quality of living quarters etc all have to be provided. There is a tendency of looking at local labour as inexpensive and easy to procure. The tourism industry also needs to look beyond just employing locals on campus and actually engaging with them on issues of education, water, agricultural produce, training etc.

## 2. Fencing of the tourism sites:

Fencing of the tourism sites by owners has a direct negative impact on wildlife movement and wildlife corridors. The porosity of the material making up the fence (barbed wire fencing is more porous than chainlink, whereas stone or brick is completely non porous) and the height of the fence are two factors that have a direct impact on wildlife movement.

Tourism establishments are located in the immediate vicinity of the protected zones of Kanha & Bandhavgarh. All these areas continue to have high wildlife movement and fences built to demarcate and protect tourism campuses deter their free movement and access to important water, food and shelter sources. Even sites that may seem very disturbed during the day could continue to be active corridors to wildlife during the night. Slower moving wildlife, younger ones of mammal species, shy sensitive species, species that move along the land (not arboreal species like monkeys) are badly affected.

The worst cases are tourist facilities with 6 feet high brick wall fences topped with broken glass problem as is the case with Krishna Wildlife resort at Kanha Kisli. The only justification seems to be that of keeping stray dogs out. This is the most harmful fencing to wildlife movement. Only arboreal species can move across these premises.

Fig 84:  
This brick wall is more  
harmful than it seems. It  
effectively blocks out wildlife  
movement, blocks views for  
wildlife and makes it  
impossible for young ones  
and small mammals to pass  
through.



The next worst case as far as wildlife is concerned is fences that have stone/ brickwalls foundation walls coming upto roughly 2 feet height. This then has a tight chainlink fence fixed on upto roughly 6 feet height. This is the case at Chitvan close to the Kanha Mukki gate. The justification here which is acceptable is that they are undertaking organic farming on what was earlier farmland and have to keep out the herbivores. Though in this instance these seem acceptable the same fence for other tourist sites is unacceptable. This type of fence only allows animals that can jump over 6 feet height, or those that can wiggle through the chainlink to enter. It does not allow burrowing animals to enter because of the stone wall, leaves out all small land animals and leaves out all young ones.



**Fig 85:**

**The base brick wall keeps out most burrowing animals and the small size of chainlink keeps out most wildlife.**

The next worse case is the chain-link fence that is fixed on metal or concrete poles that are fixed in the ground. This fence allows burrowing animals, animals that can squiggle through and those that can jump over. That leaves out a rather large part of wildlife. To illustrate; a tigress could come in but the cubs will not be able to follow. Also to note here is that chainlink comes in different sizes, the one with largest opening should be used.

The barbed wire fences where the barbed wires are placed too close to each other would allow more wildlife passage than the above mentioned fences but would still fall short. The ideal would be a fence of 4/5 feet height with barbed wire at 1.5 feet (40 cm) interval. This fence would allow free wildlife movement but keep cattle out.



**Fig 86:**

**A barbed wire fence with barbed wire placed too close as in the fence (left) is also not very wildlife friendly.**



Fig 87:

This barbed wire fence allows wildlife passage, keeping cattle out. The only thing is that barbed wire should probably be given bright colours so that wildlife does not get stuck in them.

The ideal solution would be not have any fences at all with ditches along the entire length to keep cattle out. This has been the case with both Kipling Camp and Wild Chalet. They have had mixed success with keeping cattle out, but have reaped rich dividends in wildlife movement wherein guests are able to see wildlife from their rooms.



Fig 88:

A ditch to keep cattle away is most wildlife friendly, though means greater care on behalf of staff.

Ideally of course these establishments should not be at the fringe in the first place

### 3. External lighting

High mast lights, bright lights, flood lights, all have made their appearance in some tourist establishments, perhaps out of ignorance or lack of concern. This definitely disturbs nocturnal wildlife activity and also pollutes the sanctity of the place and destroys the pleasure of other guests. Nocturnal species by



the very nature of their nocturnal activity avoid brightly lit spaces and some shy nocturnal species like flying squirrels that have a limited range can be very negatively affected if their range turns into a brightly light tourist resort. The case of both Jungle Lodges and the MPTDC premises close to the Mukki gate are examples of how Flying squirrel populations can live within tourist establishments if not disturbed. The solutions are simple, keep lighting to the minimum and place lights at a low height. Do not direct lights to the forest or other non built parts of the resort.

**Fig 89:**

**High mast lights along with their reflection in nearby water bodies are a sure disturbance to nocturnal wildlife activity.**

#### 4. Waste

Thanks to badly managed waste and hence easily and plentifully available waste food, stray dog populations have increased considerably specially at Kanha Kisli. This in turn leads to elaborate fencing to keep them off premises (adversely affecting wildlife movement) and these stray dog packs have also been attacking deers.

Establishments need to first and foremost secure the areas where they are dumping food. They have to be dog proof.

All these areas should have a stray dog population control programme, that involves sterilisation and other such measures that will result in long term stray dog population control.

Waste management in terms of segregation, composting, recycling and proper disposal are weak in most establishments where as some other establishments show a far greater capacity. This part of the work has to be given special attention and every establishment needs to have a proper system in place.

#### 5. Resorts as Mini Wildlife Habitats

With the kind of land (5 - 58 acres) and located in prime wildlife habitat, resorts can become mini wildlife havens in themselves. This has been successfully demonstrated by a number of resorts including Singinawa, Kipling, Jungle Lodges, Jungle Mantra to name a few. The nature of land in the buffer zone of these protected areas can be highly disturbed by cattle grazing and other activities and also highly degraded overgrown with lantana. By keeping cattle off their premises, encouraging regeneration of the natural vegetation, planting local species of grasses, shrubs and trees, creating water bodies the land of the resorts can help sustain wildlife. Such premises in turn provide excellent nature trails and environmental education for guests. Though finally small in size as compared to the protected area itself they can still play an important role in regenerating wildlife habitat, maintaining wildlife corridors and demonstrating ways in which regeneration of forest land can be undertaken.

## 6. Resorts as Organic Farms and Forest Plant Nurseries

Resorts as has been successfully demonstrated by Anantvan and to a certain extent by Chitvan can produce significant food requirements through organic farming methods. As some of these lands were previously agricultural land and in the close vicinity of the existing villages this approach seems most appropriate. This provides employment to locals, also provides a unique learning experience to guests. The agricultural techniques practised could also filter down to actual farming practices in surrounding villages.

A project like the Nursery of Forest Trees of Central India undertaken by Dhruv Singh at Anantvan is an excellent example of how resorts can set an excellent example of conservation, regeneration of endangered habitats and species.

## 7. Legislation

The question of legislation is an all encompassing one and absolutely needs to be addressed.

## 8. Larger Market Forces

The tourism industry on the fringes of Kanha & Bandhavgarh, other than a few exceptions functions in response to larger global market forces and the demands placed by the same. While the global market is beginning to talk more and more about green accountability, the tourism industry seems to be totally over run by the same global markets demands for luxury and leisure that manifest themselves in the facilities; air conditioning, dipping pools, spas, internet connectivity, exclusivity. The domestic tourist following a similar pattern of aspirations but without any or very limited demands on green accountability is not a very suitable role model either. By being oriented almost exclusively towards the lucrative foreign market the tourism industry makes itself vulnerable to sudden dips in arrival caused by conflict, terrorist attacks, economic downturns, epidemics.

Whether we like it or not, this is clearly Tiger Tourism, and not wildlife tourism. The tiger is undoubtedly an apex predator of exceptional beauty and both Kanha & Bandhavgarh are exceptional wildlife habitats thanks to the protection afforded to the Tiger. In the tigers well being lies the well being of the entire forest, and the inverse would be equally true. And in the tigers and forests health lies the well being of the local communities that are forest dependent, the tourism industry and its associated players.

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# ECOTOURISM

## A FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSING CONTEXT, OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS

### Conceptual framework

1. What was the set of factors leading to the decision to introduce ecotourism? Who are the actors?
2. What was the process of arriving at a definition or introducing ecotourism to communities?  
What are the components?
3. Who is promoting ecotourism? Who is branding, developing products? What are the values, agenda, and goals? What is being promoted as ecotourism?
4. Who are the larger players? What is their agenda? What are their methods?
5. Who are the smaller players? What are the financing options?
6. What are the products and where is ecotourism being located?
7. What are the laws and policies related to ecotourism development and regulation
8. Are there charters, guidelines, self regulation by communities or industry?
9. What are the various business models - entrepreneurship, partnership, cooperatives, others?
10. Are there accreditation or certification systems in operation or on the cards? Who influences and controls?
11. How is ecotourism being taught?
12. Who are involved on ecotourism research?

### Research framework for ecotourism

#### 1. Tourism related

- 1.1 Documentation of how ecotourism developed in the area
- 1.2 No. of establishments, history of growth,
- 1.3 No. of private, government establishments; local community owned; partnerships if any
- 1.4 Profile of tourism establishments – investment, area, ownership
- 1.5 Profile of tourists
- 1.6 Tour operators and travel agents; local and non-local
- 1.7 Tourism activities – products – USP
- 1.8 Tourist' requirements
- 1.9 Tourism in protected areas
  - 1.9.1. Numbers, profile of tourists
  - 1.9.2. Activities (trekking, safaris etc) and the way it is done
  - 1.9.3. Accommodation facilities provided by forest departments
  - 1.9.4. Opportunities for local people
  - 1.9.5. Closure periods, if any

- 1.9.6. Any cases of accidents, e.g. wild animal attacks on tourists
- 1.10 Business Models – what are they?
- 1.11 Product development and Marketing (what to put out and what not to put out?)
  - 1.11.1. List of tourism products; USP
  - 1.11.2. Promotional material; developed by
  - 1.11.3. What is marketed?
  - 1.11.4. Main ways of marketing
- 1.12 Branding
  - 1.12.1. Usage of certification, accreditation processes by tourism establishments
- 1.13 Partnerships - Various kinds of partnerships that are currently operational at a more broader levels e.g. donor interventions, foreign investments
- 1.14 Seasonality of tourism

## 2. Environmental impacts

- 2.1 Status report of environment of the location
  - 2.1.1. Forests, biodiversity, protected areas
  - 2.1.2. Land use
  - 2.1.3. Other development activities happening in the vicinity
  - 2.1.4. Nature of human-animal conflict
  - 2.1.5. Natural resources
- 2.2 Use of Minor Forest Produce / Non-Timber Forest Produce by the local community
  - 2.2.1. Before and after ecotourism
  - 2.2.2. Has there been a loss of access?
- 2.3 Protected areas –
  - 2.3.1. Local use vs. tourism use
  - 2.3.2. Community based conservation measures – community conserved areas and conservation areas – distinguish and describe; community involved
  - 2.3.3. Traditional conservation activities, measures
  - 2.3.4. Community involvement in conservation activities
  - 2.3.5. Specific impacts on women, other marginalised groups
- 2.4 Availability of natural resources, e.g. water, local building material etc – before and after ecotourism
- 2.5 Pollution parameters
- 2.6 Waste management
  - 2.6.1. Methods adopted by tourism establishments
  - 2.6.2. Methods adopted by responsible authorities
- 2.7 Usage of energy e.g. solar

## 3. Economic impacts

- 3.1 Traditional and contemporary occupations; shifts if any
- 3.2 Average annual income, what is the difference that tourism has made
- 3.3 Land use – traditional, tourism
- 3.4 Land ownership – tenures
- 3.5 Employment of local community in the tourism sector(disaggregated men –women)
  - 3.5.1. In tourism establishments - profiles
  - 3.5.2. Services – guides, tour operations,
  - 3.5.3. Self-employment opportunities

### 3.5.4. Scale of wages

#### 3.6 Impacts

- 3.6.1. Price rise of commodities, land
- 3.6.2. Procurement of raw materials in tourism establishments
- 3.6.3. Migration of youth
- 3.6.4. Rise in income level
- 3.6.5. Shift in traditional occupation
- 3.6.6. Linkages & leakages
- 3.6.7. Which are the sections that do not engage?

3.7 What are the revenues that each stakeholder gets from ecotourism – private establishments, governments, local governments?

## 4. Social impacts

### 4.1 Demographic data

### 4.2 Displacement

### 4.3 Crimes linked to tourism

- 4.3.1. Drug abuse/alcohol
- 4.3.2. Trafficking; prostitution
- 4.3.3. Bio-piracy

### 4.4 Gender issues

- 4.4.1. Gender roles – quantum of work for women
- 4.4.2. Employment of women in the ecotourism sector; departments, levels of work (skilled, unskilled), differential wages (women get less than men) - economic
- 4.4.3. Role of women in decision making processes in the context of tourism

### 4.5 Caste

### 4.6 Other marginalised groups and their engagement in tourism

### 4.7 Common community benefits; expenditure of surplus income – individual, community

### 4.8 Community's expectation/s from tourism and whether they are getting it

### 4.9 Experiences with home stays (impacts, interactions, dynamics of castes, class)

### 4.10 What are the capacities that were built for communities to engage with ecotourism?

## 5. Cultural impacts

### 5.1 Interaction of community and tourists on local art and culture, festivals (special shows)

### 5.2 Changes from traditional forms, patterns or return to it

### 5.3 Demonstration effect

## 6. Education & interpretation

### 6.1 Interpretation centres

### 6.2 Awareness building activities

### 6.3 Information centres, run by whom

## 7. Institutional arrangements

### 7.1 Role of LSGIs in ecotourism development. Level of awareness

- 7.2 Tourism in gram sabha (village council) meetings
- 7.3 Rights of LSGIs and ecotourism development
- 7.4 Decision making processes; discussions
- 7.5 New institutional mechanisms with representation of various stakeholders and right holders
- 7.6 Institutions built for tourism
- 7.7 What is the level of engagement of other government departments – tourism, forest?

## 8. Policy & plans

- 8.1 Are there ecotourism policies, regulations and guidelines at state level, location level?
- 8.2 When did ecotourism commence?
- 8.3 What was the motivation for setting up ecotourism project?
- 8.4 Was there tourism happening before ecotourism?
- 8.5 What are future plans? – areas, infrastructure, leasing land for private developers
- 8.6 Any support for community based initiatives?
- 8.7 Guidelines for tourism operations, tourists if any
- 8.8 Shift in role of forest department from conservation to promotion of tourism

## 9. Charters & guidelines

- 9.1 Formulated by
- 9.2 Level of implementation
- 9.3 Process of formulation
- 9.4 International conventions like UNESCO (biosphere reserves) and other multilateral environmental agreements like Biodiversity & Tourism Guidelines of the Convention on Biological Diversity.





This compilation of briefing papers is produced as part of the Life as Commerce Project in partnership with the Global Forest Coalition. The aim of this Project is to address the environmental and social impacts of market-based conservation schemes. The primary objective is to raise awareness on the impacts of such schemes and to build & strengthen capacity of local communities, social movements and women's groups to address their impacts. EQUATIONS analysed the prevalence and impacts of ecotourism in the 4 India states of Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand and the Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

The Global Forest Coalition is an international coalition of Indigenous Peoples Organizations and NGOs that aims to reduce poverty amongst, and avoid impoverishment of, indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent peoples by advocating the rights of these peoples as a basis for forest policy and addressing the direct and underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation.

<http://www.globalforestcoalition.org>

EQUATIONS was founded in 1985 in response to an urge to understand the impacts of tourism development particularly in the context of liberalised regimes, economic reforms and the opening up of the economy. We envision tourism that is non-exploitative, gender just & sustainable where decision making is democratised and access to and benefits of tourism are equitably distributed.

<http://www.equitabletourism.org>

This research has been made possible with the generous support of SwedBio ([www.swedbio.com](http://www.swedbio.com)).

